

The Nation and The Athenæum

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EVENTS OF THE WEEK

GERMANY has formally applied this week for admission to the League of Nations, and preparations to admit her are in train. Thus the condition upon which the Treaty of Locarno rests is at last in process of fulfilment. This is a highly satisfactory event; but unfortunately the ointment contains a formidable fly. The chief importance of Germany's entry to the League lies in the hope that it may finally efface the conception of the League, hitherto not entirely baseless, as an organization of the "victor States." Yet there is danger that this impression will be stamped upon it the more indelibly at the very moment of Germany's entry. We discuss this matter, which is concerned with the permanent membership of the Council, in a leading article. But, more generally, we must face the fact that the international horizon is far more clouded than it was a few months ago. Signor Mussolini shows us the temper in which one signatory of Locarno can address another. The formalities provided for at Locarno proceed, and that is something; but what has befallen the much-vaunted spirit?

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All other Fascist celebrations of Italy's entry on the "Napoleonic Year 1926," have been overshadowed by Signor Mussolini's extraordinary outburst on the subject of Italo-German relations. The occasion was a complaint made by Herr Held, the Bavarian Premier, of the oppressive character of Italian rule in the Southern Tyrol, and a threat in the German Press of a boycott of Italian goods. Herr Held, who claims, however, to have been misreported, appears to have been guilty of some exaggerations; but the main charges against Italy relate to admitted facts, such as the suppression of the German language in the Courts, the prohibition of the German Press, and the closing of German schools. Signor Mussolini's reply—couched in deliberately offensive language—was to emphasize the intention of his Government to effect a complete Italianization of the Upper Trentino; to declare that "the laws will be applied with the cold tenacity of Fascism"; to warn all concerned that Italy will tolerate no discussion of her actions; to threaten

an official prohibition on imports from Germany; and to remind Germany that "Fascist Italy can, if necessary, carry the Tricolour across the Brenner." The Fascist Press promptly supplemented the speech with a clear intimation that no interference by the League of Nations will be tolerated.

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We deal elsewhere with the general problem presented by Signor Mussolini's state of mind. The immediate points at issue were handled by Herr Stresemann, in the Reichstag, with much dignity and restraint. He rebuked Herr Held for his unauthorized excursion into the foreign policy of the Reich, and strongly condemned the suggestion of a boycott; but pointed out that international relations would become impossible if irresponsible utterances of this kind were to be made the occasion of official threats by one State against another. He said, with perfect truth, that when the oppression of subject minorities created a dangerous situation, an appeal to the League of Nations was admissible; but disclaimed any desire on the part of Germany to intervene in the matter of the Trentino, and expressed a strong desire for friendly relations with Italy. There, for the moment, the matter rests, and while Fascism, by its nature, is inaccessible to reason, we hope that the public opinion of Europe will be expressed sufficiently strongly to deter Signor Mussolini from adding provocative deeds to his "wild and whirling words."

* * *

The Foreign Ministers of the Little Entente have met in conference this week, with the affair of the Hungarian forgeries as the principal theme of their deliberations. We hope that they will not endeavour to exploit the situation in order to secure a strangle-hold on Hungary. We publish elsewhere a letter from Sir William Goode, criticizing Mr. Robert Dell's article in our issue of last week. For our part, we do not think that the affair can be dismissed lightly as the folly of an irresponsible gang of hot-heads. What has already been revealed, implicating as it does very highly placed officials, and suggesting far-reaching ramifications, makes it of

the first importance, that the conspiracy should be probed to the bottom, with no room left for doubt that anything is being kept back or that anyone is being screened. But, as Sir William Goode rightly points out, there is another side to the Hungarian régime; and Count Bethlen, by the loyal and capable manner in which he has carried out the League scheme of financial reconstruction in face of considerable difficulties, has not only done a service to his countrymen, but has made a notable contribution to the cause of economic stability in Europe. Moreover, though Fascism is, we think, to be taken seriously as a menace to political stability in the disturbed parts of Europe in much the same way as Communism elsewhere, Hungary as a State is certainly no menace to her neighbours. There is, therefore, no excuse in anything that has transpired for subjecting Hungary to any further disabilities or servitude.

* * *

An unexciting debate on the Address in the House of Commons came to an end on Monday, after the Liberals had moved an amendment regretting that the King's Speech contained no reference to educational policy "calculated to remove the widespread dismay created by the issue of Circular 1371 and Memorandum 44." Sir John Simon, in moving this amendment, made a spirited protest against education being treated as the Cinderella of the services, "as though this is the direction in which you ought almost automatically to get reduction of expenditure, while the other Departments are pleading the difficulties of automatic increase." Lord Eustace Percy, giving the impression that he was making the best of a bad job, declared that he had never contemplated that the block grant proposed in Circular 1371 would be anything but a minimum, "which would have to be added to in the light of authorities' programmes and representations." Subsequently, however, Mr. Fisher drew from Lord Eustace the disquieting admission that he was going to repeal a Section in the Act of 1921 which guarantees to the local education authorities 50 per cent. of their authorized expenditure. The more Ministers are cross-examined, the more evident it becomes that their desire to save money is imperilling the nation's educational system.

* * *

Having disposed of the Address, the House settled down on Tuesday to show how reactionary it could be on non-party issues. It was a courageous thing, however misguided, of Dr. Little to move a resolution against unqualified medical practice in general, and osteopaths in particular, at a time when public opinion has been roused to the dangers of medical trade-unionism by the case of Dr. Axham. The motion being talked out by a member of the General Medical Council, the House had no opportunity of registering its opinion on this subject. Earlier in the evening, however, it had distinguished itself by rejecting a very moderate resolution to authorize local authorities "to incur expenditure, when deemed expedient, in conveying knowledge of birth control methods to married women who desire it." It was a Labour Member, Mr. Thurtle, who put forward this proposal, in an able speech:

"In those districts," he said, "where overcrowding is most intense, where poverty is most acute, where all the elemental necessities for healthy child life are most conspicuous by their absence, you get a very high birth-rate, and in other districts, where conditions are infinitely better, you have a comparatively low birth-rate."

The motion was opposed by another Labour Member, the Reverend James Barr:

"I believe," he said, "that a bountiful Creator has provided ample resources for all, and that if we had only wise production and just distribution there would be ample for all the people."

It is useless to reason on the subject of birth control with men like Mr. Barr, who have been repeating these phrases ever since the days of Malthus, because their view does not depend on facts or arguments, but upon faith. It is disconcerting, however, to see the House of Commons defeating Mr. Thurtle's motion, after hearing only two speeches, by 167 votes to 81. All parties seem equally reactionary on this issue, and the division list is unusually interesting. The tellers for the Ayes were Mr. Thurtle (Labour) and Sir W. Davison (Tory); for the Noes, Mr. Blundell (Tory) and Mr. Scurr (Labour). Mr. Trevelyan voted for the motion, and Mr. Ponsonby against. Mr. Snowden for, and Mr. Clynes against. Mr. Trevelyan Thomson for; Sir John Simon and Mr. Runciman against. Mr. Lansbury for, and Commander Kenworthy against. Mr. Basil Peto for, and Sir Douglas Hogg against. The net result is that the Ministry of Health is encouraged to withhold from working women the medical knowledge which many of them urgently desire for the best of reasons, and the need for Birth-Control Clinics, supported by private subscriptions, becomes greater than ever.

* * *

It seems fairly clear now that Mr. Churchill will decide, if he has not so decided already, to make a considerable "raid" upon the Road Fund. In our judgment, this will be a reactionary step. We do not set much store by the objection that it will violate a solemn "pledge." An undertaking given when a charge is first imposed that it will be earmarked for certain purposes, cannot reasonably be held to debar Parliament for all time, and in altered financial circumstances, from tapping this source of revenue for general purposes. But the proposal seems to us mistaken on its merits. It is not as though these taxes on motor vehicles yielded more than is needed to meet the costs of road construction and repair. In the first place, the Road Fund defrays only about one-third of these expenses; the remaining two-thirds fall on the local rates; and the raiding of the Road Fund threatens accordingly to relieve taxes at the expense of rates, which we assert once again is the most grotesque of all forms of economy. Secondly, it is not true that we are constructing and repairing roads upon an extravagant scale. In many districts, repair work is badly behind; while, as for new construction, this, after all, belongs to exactly the same family of things as the Government's electricity scheme, capital expenditure, required to meet altered conditions, and likely to stimulate economic activity in general. There is neither sense nor coherence in pressing on with electricity, while cutting down on roads and education.

* * *

Mr. Bridgeman, in his speech to the Constitutional Club, did not actually fuse the Singapore scheme and the cruiser replacement programme into a single question of naval defence; but he placed them side by side, and intended, obviously, to suggest that they were kindred matters. We have always very carefully kept them apart, and we think the Government would be well advised to do so. We reluctantly accepted the cruiser programme because, in default of a general naval disarmament, we could not see how any responsible British Government could avoid maintaining an efficient cruiser force adequate to the protection of our ocean trade. We opposed the Singapore scheme because a battleship base in the Malacca Straits is useless for all purposes but one: that of carrying a naval offensive into Japanese waters. Cruiser replacement may fairly be put forward as a necessary item of naval defence. The Singapore base is either a profigate waste of public money, or a provocative provision for a contingency which sound policy should have no need to consider. If Mr. Bridgeman per-

sists in speaking of the two things as though they were parts of a single plan, he makes it natural to suspect that a wild-cat "next war" theory, involving a Pacific offensive, is at the back of his cruiser programme.

* * *

The first reports of the findings of the Shanghai Inquiry, to which we referred last week, have been received in this country with an extraordinary absence of comment. Meanwhile, the Canton boycott continues, and efforts are being made to extend it to Hong-Kong. Unfortunately, no figures are yet available showing the full effect of the boycott, and of the general conditions in China, on British trade; but those for cotton piece goods, by far the most important British export to that market, are profoundly significant.

EXPORTS OF COTTON PIECE GOODS TO CHINA AND HONG-KONG (£1,000).

| | 1923. | 1924. | 1925. |
|-------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| January-June ... | 4,232 | 6,678 | 4,966 |
| July-December ... | 5,760 | 5,943 | 2,526 |

Is it not time, even on the lowest ground of self-interest, that we began to take the Chinese problem seriously, and to seek for some remedy a little more promising than the Tariff Conference?

* * *

The secret trials of certain members of an organization known as the "Black Reichswehr" show that large sections of German society are afflicted with the endemic disease of secret societies which stick at nothing. The main facts are not disputed. An ex-soldier called Panier, a member of the Black Reichswehr, informed against the society to the authorities, and was shortly afterwards done to death by three men, who were duly brought to trial. The trial was held *in camera*; but it is admitted that certain ex-army officers—high officials of the Black Reichswehr—were accused of instigating the murder. One of them was found guilty; the Court declared the evidence against the others to be insufficient, though they were proved to have been accessories after the crime. The Republican Press accuses the Court of showing extraordinary partiality towards all who were not active agents in the crime, and demands publication of the whole evidence. The accusation receives strong support from the facts that the German bench is recruited from a caste in which the prejudices of the old Prussian bureaucracy are strong; that the trial was held in secret, although it is admitted that no Government Department considered this to be necessary; and that the sentence on an accessory who deliberately refrained from informing the authorities of the crime was remitted, because he had acted from "patriotic motives" in not drawing attention to the activities of illegal organizations.

* * *

The VÖSSISCHE ZEITUNG remarks that the trial has not ended, but only just begun, and it is clear that the German Government cannot wash its hands of the matter. The existence of secret semi-military societies which assassinate opponents—Herr Erzberger was murdered by an ex-naval officer who belonged to one of these sinister associations—is not only poisoning German public life, but assists in hardening certain sections of French and Polish opinion against the existing régime in Germany. The first necessity is a reform of the ex-Service men's associations. These secret societies recruit their membership from unemployed ex-Service men, to whom the big landowners on their councils can offer work and a cottage, and whose needs drive them to take an oath of obedience in return. The establishment of strong and efficient ex-Service men's associations, capable of rendering their members adequate assistance, con-

trolled by officers of character, and free from political affiliations, would do more than anything else to cut the ground from under the feet of such organizations as the Black Reichswehr.

* * *

The strike of the marine wireless operators becomes more and more complicated as it goes on—a characteristic of most strikes. The immediate cause is the Union's refusal to accept a wage reduction comparable with that accepted by the seamen of the mercantile marine last summer, but the Union has a number of quite different grievances as well. The employers are willing to open negotiations on all these matters, once the reduction in wages has been accepted. But to this the operators will not consent, presumably because they fear that the failure of the strike would hopelessly prejudice their chances of obtaining concessions on other points. Their initial opposition to any wage reduction is intensified by two factors; first, that they do not consider themselves as definitely belonging to the shipping industry, but rather to a profession with branches ashore and afloat, and, secondly, a fight on wages is, from the Union's point of view, a better rallying issue than any number of minor improvements in conditions. In many ways the position of the wireless operators is similar to that of the railway shopmen or other craft workers who find employment in a variety of different industries, and such cases always present a difficult problem. So far, attempts at conciliation by the Ministry of Labour appear to have had little success. Perhaps the most serious aspect of the whole business is that round about one thousand ships are at sea without wireless. In order to avoid a shipping hold-up the Board of Trade suspended the regulations forbidding these ships to go to sea without wireless. The position is extremely unsatisfactory, and in order to prevent its recurrence there is much to be said for establishing conciliation and arbitration machinery after the pattern of the railway system, or even a compulsory public inquiry before strike action can be taken, as in the case of the electricity supply industry.

* * *

It is a unique venture for a group of Young Liberal Study Circles to co-operate to publish a book of essays. Yet this is what the Yorkshire Council of Young Liberals has done in issuing a booklet entitled "Aspects of Liberal Social Policy." There are twelve essays, ranging from an analysis of "The State in Relation to Industry," to an essay on "Temperance Reform." The allotment of these essays was as ingenious as it was wise. The Halifax branch dealt with "Joint Industrial Councils," because they were able to consult Mr. J. H. Whitley, whilst the Batley branch dealt with Profit-Sharing, because of a successful local profit-sharing scheme at Messrs. J. T. & J. Taylor's. Details of the scheme are given, and the specific line of inquiry is how far profit-sharing can be influenced by legislation. There are essays on Unemployment, Publicity of Accounts, Housing, National Development, Agriculture, Town Land Tenure, Education, Municipal Government, and Temperance Reform. All are full of fact and suggestion, and though they are not all in harmony with each other, they are proof of application and diligent research. As Mr. Sydney Walton in his commendation says: "They are another proof that Liberal youth is alert and awake and testing its strength against the God of Things that Are." Mr. Elliott Dodds, who contributes a preface to the collection, is the leader of Yorkshire Young Liberals; and a series of his articles on "The Social Gospel of Liberalism" have been issued in pamphlet form. It is an answer to those who regularly write to the newspapers saying that Liberals must have a social policy and an industrial policy, when all the while there is one waiting to be expounded. Copies can be obtained from Mr. R. Cleworth, 39, Park Square, Leeds: at one shilling each.

A DANGER TO THE LEAGUE

IT was an essential part of the arrangements at Locarno that Germany should join the League of Nations, receiving the status of a Permanent Member of the Council. Political chaos in Germany has caused a disappointing delay in the fulfilment of this programme. But, at last, the necessary steps are being taken. Germany's formal application for membership has been received this week at Geneva; and the Council and the Assembly are to meet specially next month to deal with it. The occasion ought to be an auspicious one. Unfortunately, we are threatened with a complication which may undo most of the good done at Locarno, and may compromise gravely the whole future of the League.

We must expect, it seems, that when the proposal is made to give Germany a permanent seat on the Council, claims to a similar status will be advanced on behalf of no less than three other States, to wit, Poland, Spain, and Brazil. We must further expect that these claims, or those at least of Spain and Poland, will receive influential backing. France is known to be pressing their claims strongly; and M. Briand's wizardry is understood to have so prevailed on Sir Austen Chamberlain as to have led him dangerously near to committing Britain on their side. In short, it seems at present more likely than not that, after Germany has been admitted to the League, the Council, with whom the initiative rests, will propose that permanent membership of its body should be conferred, not on Germany alone, nor on Germany first, but on Germany, Spain, and Poland, with or without Brazil. Brazil is in a different category from the other claimants. No one else, it seems, is particularly anxious to admit her to the roll of "permanents." But she covets this dignity herself, and she happens to be on the Council as a temporary member. To alter its composition, the Council must be unanimous, so that a deal with Brazil may be essential to satisfy the ambitions of Spain and Poland.

But where, the simple-minded may ask, is the danger in all this? Why not "the more, the merrier"? Or, granting the obvious objection to an unwieldy Council, is not this merely a small administrative point, like the objection to unwieldy Cabinets? Well, if this were all, it would be bad enough. The Council's functions are so important, the inevitable difficulties under which it labours (such as its heterogeneous personnel and the requirement of unanimity) are so great, that it cannot afford to incur unnecessary handicaps to its technical efficiency. Could the Council have been trusted to act as decisively as it did in the Greco-Bulgarian affair, if it had been the body which it is now proposed to make it?

But this is far from being all. The proposal would undermine the fundamental principle of the Council's composition. That principle is that two elements go to make up the Council; a permanent element, consisting of what are called the Great Powers, and a fluctuating element, consisting of smaller States elected by their peers. The permanent members are at present four: Britain, France, Italy, and Japan. But it has been understood from the first that three other States, namely, the United States, Germany, and Russia, will be entitled to permanent seats, if and when they become members of the League. Now, it may be a somewhat arbitrary definition of the Great Powers to specify them as these seven; and in the course of time this may come to seem anomalous. But, as things are now, it is a sensible, practical definition, with the sanction of history behind it; it indicates a clear, broad line which can be reasonably defended and maintained. But if we begin admitting Spain, Poland, and Brazil, we are plunged at once

in utter chaos and anomaly. If Brazil, why not Chile and the Argentine? If Spain and Poland, why not Jugoslavia and Czechoslovakia; why not, more pertinently, Sweden or Holland? There ceases to be any criterion, even an arbitrary one. A vista is opened out of jealousy, intrigue, and log-rolling, at the end of which lies the dissolution of the League.

This again is not all. What is the motive which lies behind this move? There is no mystery about it. It is the desire on the part of France and the Little Entente for a counterpoise to the presence of Germany on the Council. It might have been thought that no such counterpoise was needed. Five out of the six of the present temporary members of the Council are Spain and Brazil themselves, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, and Uruguay, who all move more or less consistently within the "orbit" of French-Little-Entente diplomacy. Assuredly a pro-German Council is not an imminent danger. But France and her allies seek, as always, to fortify their position. The temporary representation on the Council is liable to change. With Poland and Spain as permanent members, they would feel more "secure."

But what mischief this implies! The manœuvre breathes precisely the old spirit of distrust which it was hoped Locarno had gone far to exorcise, and it must inevitably evoke the same spirit in response. We must expect in any case that awkward situations will follow Germany's entry to the League. Never was it more important that an atmosphere of good feeling should prevail. Yet, at the very moment that she enters, the Council is to be gerrymandered. She has made her application on the assumption that permanent membership means one thing; she is to find that it means another. She has been held back for years by the suspicion that the League is essentially the instrument of France; and advantage is to be taken of the interval between her admission to the League and her exercise of a veto on the Council to consolidate the French hegemony. Does not Sir Austen Chamberlain realize that if this is how the Locarno agreement is to be executed, it might as well never have been made? We entreat all well-wishers of the League to arouse themselves to what is going on behind the scenes.

MUSSOLINI IN OLD CLOTHES

ON Saturday, February 6th, 1926, Signor Mussolini strode into the Italian Chamber of Deputies in shining armour. A gilt two-headed eagle gleamed above the silver-gilt casque; a great plume waved above that; and beneath the ample folds of the military cloak there was a glimpse of enormous boots and a tinfoil cuirass. Striking an appropriate attitude, the Dictator delivered, very effectively, the lines which go with this costume, and his declamation was received with thunderous applause. Evidently the deputies of the Rump (for the Italian Parliament has been thoroughly dosed with Pride's Purge) did not notice that anything was wrong; and a foreign observer, who did notice the deplorable accident that had occurred, was moved to hold his peace by the rattling of the sword in the Dictator's scabbard. Without venturing to give Signor Mussolini that friendly hint which he would so gladly have given if it could have been done without risk to his own life and limb, this lynx-eyed observer discreetly telegraphed the news abroad. Signor Mussolini's fine suit of clothes was second-hand!

Improbable though this story sounds, there is no doubt about the accuracy of our information. If challenged, we could call some dozens of unimpeachable eyewitnesses to attest that, for at least twenty-eight years, these identical articles of apparel had been worn habitually by Wilhelm of Hohenzollern. Very sensibly, the ex-Kaiser sold them in November, 1918, when he descended from his throne and retired to spend a comfortable old age in Holland. What dealer had the temerity to pass

them off on Signor Mussolini, seven years and a quarter later, as brand-new! We condole with the Dictator in having been the victim of so impudent a deception. We trust that, when the bill is eventually presented, it will not be as heavy as the bills for brand-new regalia are known to be. But, really, how was it that Signor Mussolini, when he tried these garments on, did not perceive that they had now gone entirely out of fashion?

A good psycho-analyst, whom we have consulted on the point, suggests that this is another case of "the inferiority complex." He points out that his costume was already out of fashion, even when the Emperor William was a young man, and that we need an explanation to fit both cases. Prussia and Italy are the two youngest of the European Powers. They were weak, divided, and poverty-stricken when France and England were already prosperous, united, and strong; and their rulers were numbered among the lesser luminaries when Charles the Fifth and Gustavus Adolphus and Louis the Fourteenth were in their glory. Afterwards, when their own meritorious exertions brought them to the front, they were unable to forget that they were parvenus; and it was only when they had arrayed themselves in their royal cousins' old clothes that they could appear on parade with a modicum of ease and assurance. It is a pathetic story, for the very costume which has given the ex-Kaiser of Germany and the present Dictator of Italy, by turns, a temporary sense of being properly dressed, has made them terribly conspicuous in the eyes of people who are more *au courant* with the latest thing in royal fashions. The Kaiser was only disillusioned by a crash which cost him his throne. Really, in the name of humanity, some fellow-potentate should give a friendly warning to Signor Mussolini—somebody, that is, who lives at a safe distance from either the Brenner or Jarabub, the President of the United States, for instance, or the Amir of Afghanistan. If he is not warned in time, the Italian Dictator may find, too late, that the Kaiser's mantle has cost him more than he ever intended to pay for it.

So much for the welfare of Signor Mussolini—and we could leave it at that, if this were an affair in which the Dictator and his compatriots alone were concerned. Unfortunately, however, these accoutrements not only make their wearers look ridiculous, but are apt to inflict serious injuries on other people. The big boots come down heavily on foreign toes, the spurs graze foreign ankles, and the sword, when brandished in the traditional manner, ends, sooner or later, by slitting a foreign nose, and then—good-bye to international law and order.

The Kaiser's histrionic sabre-rattling, which we could pity and pass over in a private individual as a nervous affection, resulted, when practised by the head of a great State, in the bloodiest of European wars. Have Signor Mussolini and his applauders learnt nothing from the recent past? If they will not believe that they are making themselves and their country ridiculous—that they are depreciating instead of enhancing Italian prestige by their bombastic behaviour—perhaps their vanity will suffer them to be convinced that they are playing a dangerous game; most dangerous of all, of course, to themselves, but also dangerous to the world in general. In his speech of February 6th, Signor Mussolini literally left nothing unsaid which might prejudice our slow and laborious construction of a new international order. He sneered at the Locarno Agreements; he flouted the now recognized rights of minorities (declaring, if correctly reported, that the Southern Tyrolese "are not a national minority, but an ethnical curiosity," and that "the district must and will become

Italian"); and he insulted Germany on the eve of her application for membership in the League of Nations. This is not the first offence, and the patience of the civilized world has its limits. Happily, post-war Italy is not yet so formidable as pre-war Prussia, while the post-war world is already infinitely better organized than the pre-war world for keeping the peace. Even if the Fascists choose to cling to a childish and outworn fashion of foreign policy, under the illusion that it is something new and adult and grand, it is very unlikely that they will be able to arrest and turn back the general progress of the world's affairs. At the worst, they will make themselves a nuisance to the world at the risk of quite disproportionate injury to themselves. Do they, in their sober senses, desire to do this signal disservice to civilization and to Italy?

LIBERALISM AND THE LAND POLICY

By W. T. LAYTON.

A GLANCE at the maps showing the results of the last three General Elections reveals a hundred reasons why the Liberal Party should have an adequate agricultural policy, and in the present crisis it is incumbent upon every Liberal to put his opinions into the common stock. The views that follow may perhaps run counter to important currents of opinion in the Party; but that is a reason for expressing them now, not for keeping silent. They are neither an indication of any intention to secede from Liberalism, nor to create discord.

The primary object of agricultural policy should be to raise the standard of living of the agricultural community, to increase the amenities of the countryside, and to bring them more into harmony with those of the nation as a whole. Decent housing, a higher wages standard, and reasonable opportunity of advancement are three of the chief means to this end. All parties would probably agree in principle to this; but they would differ in the vigour and radical character of the remedies they are prepared to carry out and in their tenderness for vested interests.

The second main objective should be to give the British agriculturalist the incentive and the opportunity to keep efficient and up-to-date, without which he cannot hope even to maintain his position against competition. Cheap credit, organized marketing, and machinery for dispossessing the inefficient are among the chief means to this end.

Other motives for an agricultural policy are much more open to doubt. The Government White Paper declares that we all agree that it would be desirable to employ more people on the land. True; but if a higher standard of rural wages means, as is possible, that fewer will be employed we should accept this situation. Except as regards market gardening, poultry raising, &c., it cannot seriously be expected that any policy we may put forward will substantially increase the numbers engaged in agriculture in Great Britain. We shall do well if we retain the existing population on the land. The same White Paper also says that we should all like to grow more food at home. Granted; but we are not prepared to make sacrifices for this purpose. The assumption which has hitherto underlain British policy and must continue to do so is that normal conditions for Great Britain mean a return to something like her pre-war position as a manufacturing and trading country. This is so much more important than an increase of, say, 5 or 10 per cent. in the amount of food which we produce for ourselves that even the Government realizes that it must not burden industry either by subsidies or by protection for agriculture. Relative prices may, it is true, make it

economically possible to increase our home-grown food supply; but the Government White Paper, obviously inspired by Sir Daniel Hall, clearly suggests that this will have to be in the form of meat production and not of cereals for human food. The Government even takes the sensible view that considerations of national defence are not a valid argument for giving an artificial stimulus to home food production. But I do not mention these points to make out a case for the town as against the country. My object is rather to state clearly what are the reasonable objectives of agricultural policy. I may add that there is a back-to-the-land movement which should be developed with the utmost energy, but it is the invasion of the country by the towns. The "teeming millions" of our urban population could with advantage occupy twice the surface of the land of England that they do at present, and will do so if with the development of transport we can encourage the decentralization of our industries into garden cities.

But though various schools of thought will focus the agricultural policy in different perspective, there is a surprising measure of agreement that the agricultural reforms needed for the purposes indicated at the outset cannot be achieved under the present landlord and tenant system, which even the Conservative White Paper admits has broken down. In getting the nation as a whole to realize this fact Mr. Lloyd George's land campaign has already accomplished a very great achievement. Whether the alternative is that the nation should acquire the freehold of all agricultural land or that a system of occupying owners should be developed, will be a leading issue at next week's Convention. Mr. Lloyd George has already indicated in Parliament that for Liberals this is not a question of principle but of expediency. The Land Committee's urban proposals leave the freehold in private hands while endeavouring to acquire monopoly value for the State by other means. On the other hand, most Liberals and many members even of the Conservative Party think it would be wise for the State to acquire all mineral rights. The case for acquiring the freehold of agricultural land is much weaker than the case of the minerals, and there are many arguments against it. The argument for nationalizing mining royalties is that the power of leasing would put the State into much more effective control of the mining industry than any other method, and would incidentally permit experiment and varied methods of carrying on the coal industry;—something like the *status quo*, for example, in one district, unification in another, &c. Moreover, the comparative smallness of the number of mines means that the administrative problems involved would be simple. It is obvious that to set up administrative bodies to act as landlord on the nation's behalf to hundreds of thousands of farm holdings is a proposition of a very different order. Those who have had experience of local bodies are doubtful whether if left to themselves the controlling authorities would either be efficient or evolve any uniform policy. On the other hand, if the administration is thrown into the hands of the Board of Agriculture there is a real danger of agriculture being throttled by bureaucracy. I do not think this difficulty is overcome by the elected body proposed in the new land proposals.

But there is, perhaps, an even greater issue. History can show many examples of a very successful peasant proprietorship under which agriculture has kept pace with developing needs and produced a stable, contented population. Although one would not wish to exaggerate the psychological effect of the "magic of property which turns sand into gold," the failure of the attempt to overthrow the agricultural system in Russia is a useful re-

minder how deep-set such sentiments may be. Will the agriculturist have the same sentiment about a permanent lease which he may leave to his descendants, but cannot sell, and for which he pays a regular annual rent? The answer surely is that experience alone can tell. I personally should hesitate very much to give an unqualified answer in the affirmative, and therefore suggest that the true Liberal policy should be that both systems of tenure should be developed side by side, and a final policy be determined by the results of experience. The Candidates' Association has modified the original Green Book scheme by providing that the land shall be converted to the system of cultivating tenure gradually. But the plan leads in the end to the nationalization of all agricultural land, though the process may be retarded when the local authority and the Board of Agriculture agree. In my view the scheme needs further amendment by providing that when land is acquired by the authorities, they should have the free option of deciding whether it is sold outright or whether they retain the freehold and introduce the new system of tenure.

In any case, it would be contrary to the spirit of Liberalism if acceptance of a particular formula on this point were made a test for membership of the Liberal Party or were represented to the public as the distinguishing mark of Liberalism. It would be a tragedy if Mr. Lloyd George were to become a doctrinaire.

AT ST. STEPHEN'S

"WILL THE NIGHT SOON PASS?"

(BY OUR PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT.)

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

FEBRUARY 9TH, 1926.

"One cried through the darkness,
Watchman, will the night soon pass?"

THAT is the cry that one seemed to hear at the opening of Parliament. Never inside the House have the debates on the Address been more dreary and deplorable, the interest less keen, the attendance more diminished, and the general atmosphere of almost morbid decay more pronounced. There were no efforts of eloquence, no clash of great principles, no suggestions of large change. This may be due to the absence of practical opposition; or to the fact that the King's Speech proposes no legislation of any substantial importance; or to the soporific effect which is produced by Mr. Baldwin's kindly affirmations that if all men would love one another everything would be well. Outside there is some life. Mr. Lloyd George appears to be enjoying himself in violent campaigns; and a considerable amount of political controversy is being carried on unreported in the daily newspapers. But inside the Chamber there is neither the overwhelming and passionate attack and defence of any dominating policy or the exhibition of anything much more than second-rate political eloquence. The Labour Party appears to have fallen into a kind of stupor. The Tories, in numbers small compared to their total, loll about on their benches. The Liberals do not attend. And Mr. Baldwin, who has succeeded in packing his front bench with probably the most mediocre collection of Ministers which has been seen in any Government for the last half-century, contemplates, without obvious enthusiasm, the work of his hand, and carries on what he believes to be measures of social reform.

Labour revealed its division last week when Mr. Wheatley got up to talk fierce nonsense about Capitalism and make all the assertions, in a spirit of some violence, which the House and the country have been hearing for the past few years, and of which both have become wearied. The words sound truculent, but the manner is of the mildest, and it is evident that the product is merely the repetition of a formula desired by what is

sometimes called the "Left Wing" of the Labour Party. Unfortunately, Glasgow is absent, and the normal encouraging cheers from the back bench, with pious ejaculations in difficult dialect from Mr. Kirkwood, Mr. Buchanan, and others, failed to disturb the general air of depression and silence. The day after, Mr. Philip Snowden, representing the Right wing, was permitted to move his amendment; and a debate ensued purely academic in character, resembling those on the subject of Socialism which are waged at the Cambridge and Oxford Union Societies, although lacking in their quip and sparkle. The ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer made no secret of the contempt with which he regarded the verbiage which had been thrust into his mouth concerning fundamental reorganization of industry on the basis of public ownership and democratic control of the essential services. The operative previous clause, concerning the unemployed, could have been accepted by all parties, by none more readily than some of the younger Conservatives, who are slowly finding their way to the front, and who appear to have abandoned the paroxysm of Tariff Reform, and to be really desiring to find a method for the betterment of the social condition of those hammered by trade depression. But the result was interesting. Mr. Snowden turned round from the front bench and addressed the smiling figure of Mr. Lloyd George, perched high up behind him. He first expounded, with great skill, the famous green book on the Land, then the famous brown book on the towns, then the essential recommendations of Coal and Power, and then repudiated the quack remedies of Protection and the sluggish ineptitude of the Government's policies. He pleaded also that assurance should be given that the harder the work of artisan or labourer, the greater will be his share in the output of the business, for making workmen co-partners and co-operators and for giving to the labourer a guarantee of such results, in which case "you will gain his co-operation." The whole speech might have been made, with scarcely a verbal alteration, from the Liberal front bench, and was delivered with an air of authority, courage, and a nice selection of phrase which gave it emphasis and distinction. Small wonder that the air became filled with statements of flirtation, with prophesies of Liberal and Labour agreements, and with Mr. Neville Chamberlain's cheery remarks concerning the "glad eye." A desperate, if somewhat deplorable, attempt was made the day after by Mr. Hugh Dalton to explain that this was all nonsense; to repeat the jargon which is taught concerning class-consciousness and class-war and the rule of the proletariat. He gave a rough sketch of the progress of British industry from the time when there was a drive on the part of the employers to the present, when these employers spend most of their time "in going to the Criterion and places like that, or perhaps in going to bogus night clubs." He made no distinction between the theatre and the homely restaurant of this fearful institution, but there appeared to be a suggestion of some incredible waste and vice in having luncheon or dinner at the latter; and with such slop as this he warned off the British working men from the allurements of any Liberal combination or revival.

Owing to the lack of any life in the show, the lobby correspondents of the newspapers are driven to despair; and gossip, whether well- or ill-founded, fills their columns. It is at present asserted that the flight of the Monds was part of an arrangement with the Chief Tory Organizer, by which, in sensational fashion at the opening of the session, the greater part of the Liberal Party was suddenly to march over to the Tory benches, with guaranteed reward in secure seats if their present constituencies proved disagreeable. Only Mr. Entwistle, however, accepted, and Mr. Entwistle, although exceedingly popular with his old comrades, has abandoned politics for his own profession. It is stated, also, that Sir Alfred Mond, having hoped to convince the Candidates' Association of his own views on the Land, had convinced himself that Mr. Lloyd George would resign on being rejected by that Association, and was engaged in forwarding the conception that he would make the only possible Chairman of the Liberal Party

in the House of Commons. No one seems very bitter about his departure, and no one seems to care very much about it, as no one has ever conceived of him as a leader of men.

On Monday the darkness deepened. The subject was Education, but it might have been Scottish Estimates. I was listening in the afternoon for nearly three hours without hearing one single cheer, interruption or exhibition of any sign of emotion, except faint applause from the Conservative benches when Sir John Simon stated that many men thought that educational efficiency is not to be measured by educational expenditure. The speeches were, in the main, technical; but, of course, everyone knew that the technicalities had nothing to do with the subject at all. Lord Eustace Percy and Mr. Fisher could mildly wrangle about the advantages of block grants or percentage expenditures; and the Minister of Education could lengthily, drowsily, and with an aspect of sincerity, assert that the changes would make for greater advantage in our educational system. But, unfortunately, all this case has been swept away by the, as usual, too violent and indiscreet speeches of Mr. Winston Churchill outside the House, in which he has definitely declared that all Departments must agree to a cutting down all round, Education as much as the Admiralty. The voice, as Sir John Simon was justified in saying, might be that of a not very strong personality controlling the Education Board. But the hand was the hand of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose Budget has gone smash, and who is wildly searching round for a way out of his financial difficulties without imposing any new taxation. In face of the knowledge of this, the debate became entirely unreal. The Conservative Whips showed themselves more skilful than in the discussion before Christmas, when almost every speaker from their own side, under the pressure of teachers and local authorities, denounced the changes which were proposed. On Monday they put up a series of aged veterans—Sir Henry Craik, Sir John Marriott, Sir Charles Oman—who remarked in general that there was education and education, or that classics might be more or less desirable than practical work in the factory, or (in a lengthy and courageous peroration from the first of these) that "an humiliating and disquieting" lecture from a member of the Office of Works had shown the House of Commons how badly the building had been constructed; so that we now "see our quadrangles thick with the remnants of those redundant ornaments," and we must, when on the Terrace, "keep a respectful distance from the buildings under penalty of a broken head or something worse." All this was very pleasant and served the three purposes desired: the silencing of any possible Tory revolt against a check in the advance of the British national educational system, the occupying of time until the division came, and the emptying of the House; while no doubt greatly cheering the veterans themselves.

Parliament, indeed, appears like a public school under the shadow of a cloud; its members chatter of academic affairs, or absent themselves, or talk gossip outside the Chamber. The cloud is the event which may happen after the Coal Commission has reported.

LIFE AND POLITICS

I SUPPOSE that the intense scrutiny under which M.P.s live has its uses for the public. It has absurd results at times. Mr. Snowden, for instance, remarks in effect that he likes Mr. Lloyd George's land scheme better than he likes Mr. Baldwin's, which is what one would expect. Bright eyes in the Press Gallery were watching the scene: noting the marked amiability of the austere Mr. Snowden, and Mr. Lloyd George "blushing" with pleasure. This was wonderful enough. But how the eyes shone and the pens flew when it was seen, an hour later, that Mr. Lloyd George actually went

across and talked with Mr. Snowden! To the "sketch" writers on a dull night this was a windfall, and their brethren out in the lobby heard the glad news and rejoiced, for (in technical language) there was nothing doing. Nor was there anything in this widely trumpeted episode, except an exchange of civilities, although the professional prophets prepared us for Labour-Liberal nuptials at an early date. The time is not propitious for "olive branches" and "glad eyes." The House of Commons supports a very large staff of trained observers and gossips, and if the material is scanty—well, what are they for?

* * * *

I do not imagine that Mr. Herbert Fisher is much regretting leaving the House of Commons, though the House will be the poorer for the loss of his dignity, his wide knowledge, and elevation of mind. Mr. Lloyd George brought him into the Government at a time when party politics were in suspense. The revival of party warfare, intertribal and internecine, has left him uncomfortably isolated. I doubt whether he has ever made a party speech. He has neither the toughness nor the unscrupulousness necessary for the rough-and-tumble. His speeches have an old-fashioned deliberation and sonority, but he is a man of the study, and I would rather read him on Napoleon than listen to the best of them. The personal squabbling in the Liberal camp must have been repellent to his austere temperament. He had not the spice and vigour of speech to stir the House, which is interested, first and last, in the clash of personalities. His 1918 Education Act was a fine statesmanlike thing, but I am one of those who would have liked him to resign when the Geddes axe made a mess of it. He had his own good reasons, no doubt, for staying in office, but he would have been a great figure in the country had he thought fit to break free. Perhaps these heroic gestures cannot be expected from the academic mind, skilled in the nice balancing of issues.

* * * *

Lord Derby has invented a new kind of protest meeting. It consists in the chairman violently opposing the object of the meeting and arguing the case against the protesters. One may say it takes an Earl, and the Earl of Derby at that, to carry off the situation he created at the protest luncheon against Mr. Churchill's raid on the Road Fund. In this country "a sportsman" can do anything. I never attended a more amusing luncheon. Lord Derby's bluff periods were heard in growing consternation, and the affair became a debate with *Derby contra Mundum*. If this kind of thing spreads we shall see Sir W. Joynson-Hicks stating his case at Communist rallies and Admirals addressing peace meetings, and a general increase of public liveliness all round. Lord Derby has hamstrung the agitation and Mr. Churchill is left smiling—and raiding.

* * * *

"I do not like doctrinaires . . . doctrinaires are the vultures of principle." If any inquiring foreigner is seeking the secret of Mr. Lloyd George's renown and the habit of his mind, let him brood over this sally from his speech of last Saturday. The scorn of doctrinaires has always been a passport to the heart of the crowd. Shakespeare knew it as he knew everything, and used his knowledge in Mark Antony's oration. Then, look at the flash of that "Doctrinaires are the vultures of principle." All Lloyd George's peculiar power is concentrated in the phrase. His epigrams have the sound of the impromptu. It is like the photographer's flashlight fixing a chance gesture. This pictorial quality of phrase is his great gift as a speaker; his mind works in images. It is essentially a poetic gift. Would it not

be worth while making a collection of Lloyd George images—a sort of manual of the shorthand of oratory? This would be an entertaining book.

* * * *

After seeing "Julius Caesar" at the Old Vic a few nights ago I made the following crude reflections on my way home across Waterloo Bridge. The back of the play is broken at the end of the third act. Up to the Mark Antony harangue all is superb; the great Shakespearean stuff, nearly all done at white heat. Then I think Shakespeare, too tired or too rushed for time to go on inventing, availed himself of some old sword-and-buckler Roman play he found in the play-chest at the Globe, and padded his play out to the required length with it. There are scores of lines in the last two acts with not a note of the true cadence. Here and there the authentic Shakespeare took up his pen and wrote something in—the quarrel scene, of course, and short passages. These well up like water in the stretch of sand. Does anyone who feels the Shakespearean idiom in his bones assert that he wrote more than a few lines of Act V., Scene I.? I am not a Shakespearean scholar, and I don't know what the "disintegrators" have to say about "Julius Caesar." This is criticism by ear, and my ear rejects a good deal of the pageantry part of this play. I found myself losing all interest for quite long spells of time, and then Brutus talked with his sleepy page, and I said (so loud that an earnest neighbour rebuked me): "There, Shakespeare's writing again."

* * * *

The discovery—if the experts finally agree about it—of the site of the forum of Londonium has fallen curiously flat. Before the war such a find would have set the learned and the unlearned talking and writing. Is the historical imagination a luxury only to be indulged in happy times? I took a bus to Londonium on hearing the news, and wormed my way among the carts and concrete machines where the foundations are being made for the bank. Alas! there was nothing to be seen but some broken Roman tiles; weeks ago the precious fragment was reburied. No one has seen it except a few experts and the officials of the Royal Commission on Ancient Monuments. Surely better care should be taken of these things. Even the sacred rights of commerce should give way to the importance of preserving a relic so august. The piers ought to have been dug out and kept for everyone's inspection, whatever the cost and delay. The find of the basilica under Leadenhall Market some fifty years ago told us roughly where the Forum must have been, and now we know almost certainly. Here was "the City" of Roman times, and I feel that the City of our times ought to have shown more excitement about the find. The archaeologists are now busy rewriting the story of Londonium and recasting the old ideas about it: witness Mr. Gordon Home's excellent book. The more we know about London history the more convincingly does its unbroken continuity come home to us. The old notion of the historians that London was deserted for a century after the German invasion of the fifth century was always against common sense, and yet it is only now being effectively questioned.

* * * *

"We wish to remain a hospitable people even though our hospitality is abused; even when a primitive folk wanders through our cities, and one sees walking about individuals dressed in very primitive style." When I read this noble utterance of Mussolini, my memory leapt back to a certain afternoon in Ferrara last autumn. It was the hour of siesta, and everything swooned with heat round the rosy castle and the cathedral with its façade of chased silver. As I dozed over a cup of coffee in the square there appeared two tall boys, fair-haired and blue-

eyed. They certainly were "in very primitive style"—bare-headed, their soiled shirts open at the neck, wearing running-shorts, socks and enormous nailed boots. They had bundles tied with string on their backs. Mussolini had not yet spoken, and they were unmolested. The Italians regarded them with lazy indifference. They told me they were German students. They had tramped it down from Bavaria, and they asked me the road to Rome. Away they tramped through the withering heat, and they disappeared in the dust, leaving me thinking of their youth, their gay courage, their happy poverty. But the German students must no longer offend the polished Italians with their "primitive style." Mussolini has his eye on them. He will, I suppose, have such modern barbarians seized and forcibly dressed in trousers and six-inch collars into the semblance of Italian "bloods." Then civilization will be safe.

* * *

Outside one of the biggest railway stations in London, I saw one evening last week a sight which amazed me. On an upturned sugar-box lay a pile of newspapers with about three-shillingsworth of coppers on top of them. While I watched, many people passed, and a dozen or more stopped and exchanged a penny for a newspaper. I wanted a paper myself, and, as no vendor appeared, I put down sixpence and helped myself to fivepence change, expecting all the time to feel a hand on my shoulder and to be roughly asked what I was "up to." Fully ten minutes elapsed, however, before a man hurried up with another bundle of papers, and shovelled the money into his pocket. He was accustomed, he said, to "trust his customers"—and a great many other people besides—in this way. What are we to make of it? My first inclination was to swell with pride at London's honesty, but, on reflection, I suspect that the originality of the man's proceedings is his protection. The shady character is too distrustful to help himself to money so temptingly exposed.

KAPPA.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"FASCISM AND FORGERY"

SIR.—There are some things in life, however long one unexpectedly lasts it out, that continue to pass understanding: for example, why the article from Paris on Hungary by Mr. Robert Dell in THE NATION of February 6th was entitled "Fascism and Forgery" instead of "Hungaria Delenda Est." To be sure there was a sensational prologue which led one breathlessly to expect the revelation of a vast international Fascist conspiracy, but this petered out, and the greater part of the article was devoted to an attack on the present régime in Hungary. The pretext of the prologue signally failed to hide the purport of the article. That came out clear and unabashed in the closing sentences. The French Government "desire to bring the whole matter before the League of Nations"—not only the matter of the note forgeries, but also, judging from the three preceding columns in THE NATION, all the past and present "sins" of the existing régime: Hungary's attitude towards the Allies and the Jews and the Little Entente and Disarmament and the whole bag of tricks procreated by the benevolent Treaties of Peace. "It may be hoped," Mr. Dell wrote, "that there will be no opposition in London to such a course." And then this: "The Hungarian abscess must be pricked." A pretty paraphrase for "Hungaria Delenda Est."

A free hand for France to "prick the abscess," maybe with a needle of the Ruhr pattern; no opposition from London, please. A splendid idea, the true spirit of Locarno—and of the Little Entente. Kick the under-dog and kick him harder when he limps.

Within the limitations of a letter it is impossible to correct or refute nearly five columns of misrepresentation

wherein Mr. Dell diagnosed the causes of the "abscess" and commented upon matters *sub judice*. The taste of Mr. Dell's comments is illustrated by the attempt to make damaging insinuation out of the statement that Count Bethlen, Prime Minister of Hungary, is the "brother-in-law" of Count Teleki, and that Count Teleki was officially connected with the Institute where the notes were forged. The accuracy of Mr. Dell's comments can be appraised by the fact that Count Bethlen is *not* the brother-in-law of Count Teleki, and that Count Teleki had *no* official connection with the Institute in question. It is, of course, not a question of real importance, but it serves to expose the animus and the inaccuracies of those who desire, for political or other motives, to exaggerate the seriousness of the note forgeries to the detriment of Hungary. It would certainly seem necessary first of all to administer to those anxious to "prick the Hungarian abscess" a stringent edulcorant.

Mr. Dell describes the Hungarian governing classes—the present régime—as "extraordinarily unscrupulous, arrogant, irresponsible, and frivolous," while Hungary, according to Mr. Dell, is a "land of comic opera" where "almost any mad enterprise is possible." It was to these unscrupulous frivolers that the Chairman of the Financial Committee of the League of Nations, speaking on behalf of all his colleagues, addressed the following statement:

"The Committee are glad to convey their very sincere congratulations both to you, Count Bethlen, who have directed the fortunes of your country through so many difficult years, and are still guiding it through the present effort of reconstruction, to the Hungarian Government, and to the Commissioner-General."

After several years of close association with Hungary I venture to prefer the considered opinion of the League's Financial Committee to the diatribes of Mr. Dell, which, to do him justice, are mostly quotations from a subsidized Paris Press.

Attacks of this kind serve no purpose except to embitter international relations and accentuate hatreds. What really is needed in order to straighten out an admittedly difficult situation in Hungary is support from fair-minded people and papers throughout Europe for all honest effort on the part of the Hungarian Government to suppress extremist movements directed against law and order, be they Fascist or Communist. That the Hungarian Government are honestly trying to bring to justice and to punish, without regard of persons, those found guilty in connection with the note forgeries would appear to be established by the following statement in THE TIMES of February 4th:

"In the forgery affair it (the Hungarian Government) has, however, done all that could possibly be expected of it by insisting on a full judicial investigation, and also on a Parliamentary inquiry with the participation of representatives of the Opposition."

—Yours, &c.,
WILLIAM GOODE.

49, Westbourne Gardens, London, W.2.
February 8th, 1926.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE AND THE LIBERAL PARTY

SIR.—Will you give me space to deal briefly with one or two criticisms passed on my letter in your issue of January 23rd?

The question I raised is not in its essence a petty or personal question. It is a question—if the phrase be not too large—of saving the soul of the Liberal Party.

The plea of unity urged is very natural, but it does not, I think, meet the case. We know that argument well. The Coalition Government was built upon a cry for unity, and in a few years it lay shattered. Mr. Lloyd George's followers have since relied upon the same cry. But some of them have already found a home on the Conservative benches, and others appear to be drawn in that direction by forces of disunion not likely to decrease. Can it, I would ask, be a sign of unity that men so circumstanced should be summoned to elect the Liberal leader in the House of Commons, while the men there whose Liberalism has never failed or faltered are in open revolt against this pretension? And can it be a sign of unity that the leader thus selected should insist on maintaining a separate organization of his own, to say nothing of separate resources—a matter delicate to

touch on—which were certainly not contributed for any Liberal cause?

I submit that arrangements of this description can never bring genuine unity with them, and that no man who cares for realities in politics either expects or wishes them to last.

Let me say two words more. First, I should like to join with Liberals all over the country in thanking the seven Liberal Members, who rejected these proposals, for the wisdom and courage they have shown. They stand for no personal interest. They stand for sincerity in politics, for principle and loyalty in public life. They will be found, I think, with the leaders behind them, to be the nucleus round which—as round Sir Donald Maclean and his small following in an earlier Parliament—the real Liberalism of the country will rally and revive.

And secondly, I would add a word of appeal to Lord Oxford, to whom magnanimity is natural, but not more natural than fidelity to friends. Lord Oxford knows better than anyone what his loyalist followers feel on this subject. It is not a feeling which they ought to be asked to compromise for an insincere reunion or an easy life. One can understand the pressure brought to bear. But I do not believe that Lord Oxford will ever use his great authority to hand over the Liberal Party to a successor, the quality of whose Liberalism was laid bare and tested between 1918 and 1922.—Yours, &c.,

CHARLES MALLETT.

February 3rd, 1926.

P.S.—Since this letter was written, I have seen the plea made by one of your correspondents that Mr. Lloyd George's new land policy should be allowed to obliterate all other considerations. On that point I would only say that the interesting land scheme, which Mr. Lloyd George has announced his intention of pursuing whether Liberals approve of it or not, does not at present seem very likely to draw his followers into the Liberal Party, and that no new policies, whatever their merits, ought to close the eyes of Liberals to the character and record of the leaders they adopt. It is not by burking vital issues that unity and conquest are achieved.

SIR,—I have read in your recent issues the letters dealing with Mr. Lloyd George's relations with the Liberal Party, and I feel compelled to say, as a young Liberal, how thoroughly sick I am of the quarrelling and bad feeling within the party.

I have come quite definitely to the conclusion that, if we set ourselves to the task that is before us, the questions of leadership and the questions of what to do with (or without) Mr. Lloyd George will solve themselves.

It seems that those who are creating the most disturbance are for the most part those who do the least towards making the party united. Those who have the greatest cause for complaint are keeping away from the scene of trouble, and in a very admirable way are doing their utmost, along sound lines, to bring the party back into its own again.

"A house which is divided against itself cannot stand." We all know Mr. George's past record, but we do not do ourselves any good by discussing it. Let us concentrate our energy on something of greater importance than arguing about the character of our leader and writing letters threatening to quit if he does not resign.

We have a good programme—a programme which we have all helped to shape—and it is our first duty to make that programme public property, to preach it and to talk about it on every possible occasion.

If we keep our mind fixed on Liberal principles, Liberal ideals, and an ultimate Liberal victory, and try a dose of "team spirit," I feel sure that our troubles will come to a speedy end.—Yours, &c.,

C. PHILIP FOTHERGILL.

Hill Croft,

Earlsheaton, Dewsbury.

February 8th, 1926.

SIR,—In THE NATION of February 6th you say that it might have been wiser for Mr. Lloyd George to have retired from the Chairmanship of the Parliamentary Liberal Party

in favour of Sir John Simon. In this I entirely agree with you. It would have done Mr. George no harm in the country, but rather rallied to him some of those who are beginning to leave him; while in the House of Commons the position of leader of the Liberal members does not at present give him any powers which he could not afford to part with—at any rate for a time. If he did this his more energetic opponents might see the question in better proportion—an excellent thing for the prestige of the party.

The attitude so many Liberals take up with regard to the Land scheme seems to me curious. They profess to be staunch supporters of the party, and talk about making it forge ahead to conquer. But how can this be brought about without a definite policy? They must see that the glorious past of the party is useless unless backed by the promise of fresh achievements. Yet when a policy is suggested, it is spurned almost the moment it appears, apparently just because its conceiver is personally disliked by them, and because it is, perhaps, a little extreme and crude. But then what great movement, policy, or scheme was not extreme or crude when first brought out? Only a man who is perfect can produce a policy that is ideal at its outset, and neither Mr. Lloyd George nor anyone else is perfect. This present crudeness does not prevent the Land Scheme, when modified and with its rough edges smoothed down, from being seriously considered as a possible Liberal policy. Surely it is Conservative rather than Liberal to fight shy of something new? It would at any rate have been more in keeping with the spirit of Liberalism to have awaited the verdict of the Land Convention.

The rural districts are clamouring for someone to take an interest in them, and help them to put farming on a sound basis once more, and why should not Liberals be the first to consider them? It would give the party a progressive policy, which is Liberalism's greatest need at present. With the Liberal rank and file given a definite gospel and goal, the quarrels at the top would soon fade into the background. So let Liberals do their utmost to find a policy, and present once more a united front.—Yours, &c.,

B. W. DAY.

THE LIBERAL SECESSIONS

SIR,—I can understand my former colleagues in Parliament writing to their friends and explaining, or trying to explain, why as good Liberals and Free Traders they have joined the Tory Protectionists, but what for the life of me I cannot understand is why they address these missives to Lord Oxford! Surely the proper quarter for these humorous fulminations is to the Editor of PUNCH?—Yours, &c.,

JOHN H. HARRIS.

National Liberal Club, Whitehall Place, S.W.1.
February 7th, 1926.

MR. SNOWDEN AND PARTY CO-OPERATION

SIR,—You quote, with approval, Mr. Snowden's words at Blackburn on "Co-operation in Parliament upon agreed measures."

It is perhaps due to Mr. Snowden to put on record that, to the words quoted by you, he added this important qualification: "There is one thing which we would never for a single moment consent to. That is, the slightest limitation of our perfect freedom to continue to wage political warfare in the country for the purpose of increasing the electoral strength of the Labour Party." (The italics are mine.)

Mr. Snowden's qualification would seem to preclude any of those electoral "arrangements" which our present electoral system demands from co-operating parties. The method of election of which he fully approves, namely, proportional representation, leaves parties free to develop their programmes in all the constituencies and yet makes possible co-operation in Parliament after a General Election.—Yours, &c.,

JOHN H. HUMPHREYS.

82, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W.1.
February 5th, 1926.

"GERMANY'S COMING PROBLEM"

SIR,—The burden of Mr. Keynes's article on the situation in Germany is that the slump which became marked last autumn has been caused by the deflationary effect of the Reichsbank's credit policy.

Now the most obvious way of determining whether or not there has been deflation would appear to be to examine the statistics of note circulation. But here we find that the figures show a steady increase to the end of 1925. It is true that the rate of increase in circulation was lower in the latter half of the year than in the earlier months; but it seems a most questionable stretching of the term to call this deflation. Rather, in view of the fact that prices were rising during the first part of the year, a decline in the rate of currency expansion—if not a complete check to currency expansion—may be said to have been called for, other things being equal, in the interests of price stability.

Mr. Keynes, however, seeks to establish his thesis in another way, by showing the inadequacy of German currency at the present time. For this purpose the present volume of currency is compared with the estimated circulation in 1913; and, the loss of territory (together with the decline in wealth per head?) being offset by the rise in gold prices, a deficiency is held to exist to the extent to which the present figures are the lower. But this calculation is of very doubtful value. On the one side, the figure of 6 milliard marks, so confidently put forward by several writers as representing the actual pre-war circulation, is only an estimate, and is regarded by Lansburgh as a distinct overestimate. On the other side no regard seems to have been paid to the effect of the development of the "Bargeldlose Zahlungsverkehr" (particularly through the medium of the communal banks and their Giro-Zentralen) in diminishing the need for cash. However difficult it may be to assess the importance of this last factor, it is one which cannot possibly be left out of account if the problem is to be approached in this way. I suggest, however, that your readers may satisfy themselves more readily of the weakness of Mr. Keynes's position by considering that the volume of currency was appreciably smaller in the early part of 1925 than it is now, yet that it more than sufficed, on Mr. Keynes's own showing, to maintain active trade at higher prices.

The only certain evidence that Mr. Keynes has cited is that prices have fallen since the summer. But surely it would be begging the whole question to assume that this has been due to the policy of the Reichsbank.—Yours, &c.,

BARRETT WHALE.

Faculty of Commerce, The University,
Birmingham.

February 6th, 1926.

MR. MCKENNA AND INDUSTRY

SIR,—Mr. McKenna in his speech to the shareholders of the Midland Bank stated a profound truth which deserves to be emphasized. I have noticed that in most of the criticisms of his speech by the City Editors it has been conveniently ignored. I quote as follows:—

"Nothing is so certain as that a fall in prices, or a lower velocity of circulation, will have an adverse effect on the volume of production. It is at this point that the confirmed deflationist gets into difficulties. A decline in production increases the cost of manufacture, and tends to arrest the fall in prices. In manufacture there is no law of diminishing returns. On the contrary manufactured goods are produced cheapest when plant is run at 100 per cent. of capacity, and if the total of production is reduced the cost of manufacture of what remains is proportionately increased."

The above is profoundly true, and it is the ignoring of this truth that is mainly responsible for the present parlous state of our industries.

In 1920, in a conversation I had with a high official, I protested against the restriction on the issue of currency notes. The reply was, "We were bound to do it, we must get prices down." To that I answered:—

"There are two ways of getting prices down. One is by restricting the currency, the other is by multiplying the goods, and from what I know of my own trade, and of others with which I have come into contact under the Profiteering Act, the great demand for goods has called forth an extraordinary amount of enterprise on the part of manufacturers. Everywhere manufacturers are in-

creasing their plant, trying new methods, and so on." (This was all the more remarkable seeing that the cost of building and machinery was then tremendously high, and of any saving effected the Government took 60 per cent. in E.P.D.)

I went on to say:—

"The workmen are getting a little of the sunshine that Mr. Lloyd George promised them. They are now buying the boots and the shoes, the clothes, the furniture, the glass and the crockery, gramophones, bicycles, and even in some cases motor-cars, which formerly only the middle-classes bought (e.g., serge instead of shoddy, china cups and saucers instead of earthenware), and if you get 30 million people demanding goods that have hitherto been produced for only 10 million naturally there will be a big increase of price, but give the manufacturers time to alter their production to the altered demand, and you will find that prices will steady themselves. More than that, they will tend to come down, because it is true to say that in most of our staple industries producing commodities in normal times 60 per cent. of the goods are sold at a loss, 10 per cent. are sold on or about cost, and the profit is made on the balance. In other words, the middle-classes and the rich people pay for the goods consumed by the working-classes. (This is the real answer to the Socialist formula, 'production for use and not for profit,' for if this formula is strictly applied it must necessarily mean a greatly increased cost of living to the working-classes.) What is happening now is that the demand for the unprofitable goods has greatly lessened, and the demand is running on the highly profitable goods. Hence there will be a big margin for a reduction in prices."

This is the snag which the deflationists are up against. The remedy is for the Government to (1) remove the restriction on the issue of currency notes, and (2) announce that they will in future pay more attention to the stability of prices than to the stability of the dollar exchange. There is no other way out except at the cost of unnecessary and undeserved misery and suffering to millions of people, manufacturers gradually losing their capital and being ruined, and workpeople, through no fault of their own, going about workless. We are told that if we set our teeth and stick it out ultimately things will come right. That may be so perhaps ten years hence, but only because the financiers will have been placed in a position in which they will be able to buy up businesses for a song, and the unskilled worker has gone back to the position he occupied pre-war, when, on good authority, we had ten millions on the border-line of starvation. Professor Bowley in his recent book has shown that as compared with 1913 there has been a great improvement in the standard of living of the working-classes, above all of the unskilled labourer.

After the Franco-Prussian war a similar state of things existed, and the position then was only relieved by the finding of gold in South Africa, which, to put it bluntly, was inflation.—Yours, &c.,

T. B. JOHNSTON.

February 4th, 1926.

NORTH KENSINGTON BIRTH-CONTROL CLINIC

SIR,—We would like to bring to the notice of your readers the work of the North Kensington Birth-Control Clinic, which has completed its first year. It is an off-shoot of the Walworth Clinic, which has also founded similar centres at Cambridge and Wolverhampton. The women who have received instruction at the Kensington centre come from a wide area; they are mostly very poor and are struggling with appalling housing difficulties, particularly those who come from the immediate neighbourhood, where housing conditions and infant mortality are among the worst in London.

The women whom we relieve from the apprehension of further unwanted children are themselves our best propagandists amongst others with the same burdens; but this clinic, and others like it, must depend for their continuance on the financial support of a more fortunate public.

We should be glad to send our report and any further information to anyone who is interested in this much-needed work.—Yours, &c.,

MARGERY L. SPRING RICE.
(Chairman of Committee.)

MARGARET F. LLOYD.
(Hon. Secretary.)

12, Telford Road, W.10.
February 7th, 1926.

"THAT FANTASTIC OLD GREAT MAN" *

By AUGUSTINE BIRRELL.

"I do not know a more heartless sight than the reprint of the 'Anatomy of Melancholy.' What need was there of unearthing the bones of that fantastic old great man to expose them in a winding-sheet of the newest fashion to modern censure? What hapless stationer could dream of Burton ever becoming popular?"

SO wrote Charles Lamb nearly a century ago in the lucky pages of the LONDON MAGAZINE. The particular reprint that thus incurred the wrath of the "gentle Elia," as Lamb is still too frequently styled, may possibly have been the edition of 1806 in two volumes with two frontispieces produced in London by one Du Bois, but as we have never set eyes on it, we pass it by without comment, beyond saying that if ever there breathed two men who were entitled to speak out their minds about Robert Burton, they were Laurence Sterne, who pillaged him without scruple or acknowledgment, and thereby restored him, after a hundred years of neglect, to a measure of popularity, and Charles Lamb, who in 1802 published under his own then almost unknown name his "Curious Fragments," playfully purporting "to be extracted from a commonplace book belonging to Robert Burton, the famous Author of the 'Anatomy of Melancholy'" ; fragments of parody that show how intimate was the acquaintance of the parodist with the very soul of the "fantastic old great man" whose humours were so lovingly exhibited.

How enjoyable it would be to overhear and reproduce the opinions of Sterne and Lamb on this brand-new Nonesuch Edition! What would the Pillager and the Parodist have to say about it? But, as this will be recognized as impossible, even upon this side of the Tweed, we must content ourselves with our own opinion, which is that it is a delightful edition, both to hold and to read, and is, in truth, the very thing for which our old age has long waited. Reasons for this opinion will be given very shortly later on.

How Burton himself stands at this moment in the memories and estimate of the "reading public" it would be at once presumptuous and impossible even to pretend to say. The fact that the Nonesuch Press will have no difficulty in disposing of their 750 copies on Dutch paper in two folio volumes, and their 40 copies on Japon vellum in one volume, does not answer our question, for there are book-buyers abroad to-day who buy books, as they do stocks and shares, not to hold, but to sell on a rising market.

Burton in his lengthy and almost too delightful Preface to his great book (we say *too* delightful because, as is the case with the first four books of "Paradise Lost," the reader of the "Anatomy" can seldom resist the temptation each time he takes the book up of beginning again at the beginning and consequently rarely gets to the end)—Burton, we were about to say, though in the course of this Preface he deals at length, and with exquisite humour, with the manufacture and multiplication of books, and of their treatment by their buyers and the criticisms to which they are exposed, says nothing, because he knew nothing, of this incursion of the shop into the library.

So far as Burton himself is concerned, it matters little how he stands to-day or whether he is bought for love or in the hope of gain. His strange book has already undergone such vicissitudes of fortune that he may composedly "sit out" another century or so, waiting for

the next turn of the wheel. During the seventeenth century, that age of dumpy, ugly quartos and folios, congested heaps of closely printed pages, the "Anatomy of Melancholy," despite its clothing, basked in the sunshine of public favour. From 1621, the date of its first appearance (in quarto), down to 1676, when the eighth edition (in folio) was quickly absorbed, Burton remained, to the credit of our ancestors, a popular book. For some years after 1676, the secondhand copies, coming, as they would do, frequently on the market, were probably sufficient to meet the demand. In the Sale-Catalogue of Dr. Johnson's library (dispersed in 1785), Lot 472 contained a copy of Burton, with two other unnamed volumes, but as the date of publication is not supplied, we have no means of knowing which of the eight editions it was, according to the much advertised legend of the secondhand booksellers, that was used to coax Johnson out of his bed two hours earlier than was his habit. This legend, so industriously circulated amongst book-buyers by interested parties, is incredible—being plainly *Contra naturam Samuelis*. The story has obviously been misreported, and as it comes to us, not direct from Boswell, but at secondhand, we shall be safe in assuming that according to the true version, the "Anatomy of Melancholy" was the only book that kept Johnson out of bed for two hours longer than usual. This version lessens the value of the compliment, and indeed almost reduces it to nothing, but renders it, however unconvincing, still credible.

After 1676, no edition of Burton appeared for 124 years. How is this to be explained? Sir Walter Scott, who kept his eye upon the book-market and the rise and fall of prices as closely as do our modern speculators, attributes the rise of price in secondhand copies of Burton, noticeable in his time, to the appearance, first in 1798 and afterwards in 1812, of that delightful book of Dr. Ferriar's "Illustrations of Sterne," which first revealed to a careless age the shameless, but highly original, manner in which Tristram Shandy, alias Yorick, alias Sterne, had filled his larder from Burton.

It is quite likely that Scott's reason is a good one, for Dr. Ferriar's book must have put to shame the *Intelligenzia* of the period, for ever since 1761 "Tristram Shandy" had been one of the most widely read of books, and yet, apparently, no one of the indolent tribe of reviewers had discovered the extent, the incredible extent, of Sterne's stealings, not only from Burton, but from other authors of repute. Quite lately, on a much smaller scale, the same thing has been discovered in the case of "John Inglesant," a book that was reviewed at length in almost every newspaper in the land, was discussed at thousands of dilettante tea-tables, and was made the subject of sermons and literary addresses. Wisely did Johnson remark, "It is amazing how little Literature there is in the world!"

It is now high time that a word or two should be said about the actual contents of this new edition of the "Anatomy of Melancholy," and we can think of no better plan than to print side by side some quotations from Burton and Sterne, thus illustrating the styles and methods of two of the most fascinating of our English authors, as well as two of the greatest of our literary thieves, though Burton derives much of his charm from his habit of thrusting his plagiaries into your face, whilst Sterne derives his from his uncanny skill in concealing

* The Nonesuch Burton. Two Vols. Folio. Illustrated by R. M. Kauffer. 1925. £5 5s.

his crime. Here are our examples, taken from Ferriar—where plenty more are to be found.

"*Burton*: 'Tis an inevitable chance, the first statute in Magna Charta, an everlasting Act of Parliament, all must die.'

"*Sterne*: 'Tis an inevitable chance, the first statute in Magna Charta—it is an everlasting Act of Parliament—my dear brother—all must die.'

"*Burton* (a translation from a letter of Servius): Returning out of Asia, when I sailed from Aegina towards Megara, I began to view the country round about. Aegina was behind me, Megara before, Pyreus on the right hand, Corinth on the left; what flourishing towns heretofore, now prostrate and overwhelmed before my eyes. Alas, why are we men so much disquieted with the departure of a friend, whose life is much shorter when so many goodly cities lie buried before us. Remember—thou art a man—

"*Sterne*: Returning out of Asia, when I sailed from Aegina towards Megara I began to view the country round about. Aegina was behind me, Megara was before, Pyreus on the right hand, Corinth on the left. What flourishing towns now prostrate on the earth. Alas! alas! said I to myself, that a man should disturb his soul for the loss of a child when so much as this lies awfully buried in his presence. Remember, said I to myself again, remember that thou art but a man."

Yorick seems never to have blushed. Wishing to criticize plagiarists, how does he do it? Burton had written:—

"As Apothecaries we make new mixtures every day, pour out one vessel into another—we weave the same web still, twist the same rope again and again."

And so Sterne follows his suit:—

"Shall we for ever make new books, as apothecaries make new mixtures by pouring out of one vessel into another. Are we for ever to be twisting and untwisting the same rope? for ever in the same track—for ever at the same pace?"

Sterne's most famous "crib" from Burton is too long for quotation. All lovers of Tristram, if not of Burton, will recall the paragraphs in "Tristram Shandy," ending with "The Lady Baussiere rode on."

What makes Sterne's plagiarisms different from other people's is that he has employed the miscellaneous matter he had stolen from his predecessor in building up his own intensely original masterpiece. But for Burton's "Collectanea" we never could have had the exquisite characterization of the elder Shandy, and but for the elder Shandy's sophisticated and borrowed learning we never could have enjoyed, by way of contrast, the divine simplicity of my uncle Toby. Burton and Sterne, thanks to the researches (within reach of everybody) of a Manchester doctor, now march hand in hand down the corridors of Time.

We must now give our reasons for delighting in this new edition of "The Anatomy of Melancholy." *First*, its *format*.—Instead of a dumpy, ugly "facsimile," or of a modern three volumed octavo, we are presented with two slim folios, light in hand, easy to hold, and owing to the spreading of a beautiful type exceedingly easy to read.

Secondly.—Whatever may be said of Mr. Kauffer's Illustrations by those critics who are, or profess to be, experts in the matter of illustrations; and on this part of the case we can say nothing, for the only book-pictures we have ever stopped in our reading to look at are those of Bewick, Cruikshank, Doyle, Tenniel, and Mr. Weedon Grossmith—and certainly Mr. Kauffer's pictures are not in the least in the manner of any of those great masters—we can only therefore, writing as a mere reader, express our unbounded gratitude to this artist for having broken up the columns of these two folios so agreeably, thus getting rid of that horrible congestion of close print that hitherto has kept Burton a closed book. Now it is easy to read the "Anatomy of Melancholy" *all through*, a feat which the readers of the eighteenth century evi-

dently found impossible—*teste* Dr. Ferriar—nor have we much confidence in the final perseverance of the Burtonian saints of a later day.

One fault, and one fault alone (for misprints are almost unavoidable in such a *cento* of quotations and hard names) appears to us inexcusable—the omissions of Burton's marginal notes. As well omit Bunyan's from the "Pilgrim's Progress"! We can understand why it was done, for their retention would have somewhat spoilt the appearance of the page, but for all that their omission cannot be passed over without a sigh.

AN APOLOGY FOR TRASH

IF trash were a forlorn cause, to eulogize it would be but the fussiness of a melting old lady who stops to fondle a pariah cat and call it pretty pussy. But trash is a rock-built institution; millions of people take it for granted as completely as they accept day and night and mealtimes; it is perfectly synchronized with a voracious need, and, like a good machine, it keeps up a phenomenal supply. Secure in the passive approval of this multitude, trash can dispense with our praise and sleep through our abuse. Its patrons would as soon think of apologizing for their taste in novels, pictures, and songs as for walking on the common pavement.

Why, then, attempt to defend this Leviathan against the pinpricks of the highbrow few? There is a personal reason, trivial beside the colossal unconcern of our subject, but locally of considerable import. Despite a careful education, calculated to place us beyond the interests of the inarticulate crowd, many of us are not entirely immune. The spirit of trash still lingers in the attic of our intellectual edifice, and, though the door may be triple-barred with prejudice, that spirit is potent beneath its layer of dust and heaves powerfully at times. Our emotions are liable to be strangely excited by a trumpery film at which our intelligence guffaws; we find ourselves humming the dance jingles played *ad nauseam* by street musicians beneath our office windows; at times we are swept from the grasp of a trained judgment by a sentimental story. Our highly specialized literary conscience demands an inquiry into the merits of trash in order to justify these occasional debauches with so-called "bad art."

There is one piece of balm for the refined conscience; for, in spite of literary critics, trash is not bad art, nor, indeed, is it any form of it. It dresses in the manner of art, but in spirit it is an independent genus. "The Sheik" is in the form of a book, but it is not a piece of literature; "Show me the way to go home" consists of rhymed material set to a tune, but it is neither poetry nor music; the illuminated advertisements in Piccadilly Circus are pictorial in form, but they are not even poor relations of art. There is a no-man's-land where trash and art appear to meet, but in its unmixed form, trash is unmistakable. It is protean in its character, the darling of an hour, which takes on the shape of the changing times. But "plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose." Whether it consists of gaudy spectacle, bombast, a primitive type of humour, or an irresistible jingle, the lines of a certain stock mould are visible.

We may discover the individual properties of trash by taking a passage from a queen of best-sellers and focusing upon it the lens of research.

"Later, hand-in-hand, they looked across the valley to the shining crags that glistened spear-like in the sun.

"A great silence lay around them—a peace unspeakable—that those silver crests lighted into the splendour of Infinity.

"They stood alone together,—above the world—with their faces to the mountains.

"And thus standing with the woman he loved, Nick spoke briefly, it seemed lightly, yet with a certain tremor in his voice.

"'Horses,' he said,—'and chariots—of fire.'

"And Muriel looked at him with love and understanding in her eyes."

Now the faults of this quotation are too obvious to deserve exhaustive analysis—strained punctuation to

suggest significant lacunas, rhapsodic lyricism, false pregnancy, a studied prolixity, the continual wringing of one emotion till it is bone dry. But there are certain strands of new wool amid the shoddy. This passage is undeniably vivid. It suggests that the author can tell a story—no mean accomplishment when we consider how many of the great have spent their substance on the trimmings of style and left insufficient material for the narrative garment. Again, there is nothing common about this extract. The figures that move in the novels of Edith Wharton and Thomas Hardy are very commonplace; they are mere men and women like you and me; but the creations of Miss Dell are supermen in build and god-like in their speech. Their daily round is as magnificent as Mary Ellen's dreams of aristocracy. The situations and personages in these melodramatic novels differ no more than letter-boxes, but, though the element of surprise may be absent, there is the more subtle delight of being able to recognize as a familiar thing something which is grand and noble, "something afar from the sphere of our sorrow."

And here we touch the mainspring of this titanic appeal—sentimentality. It takes the place of thought in most films, novels, and revues, permitting the consumer to absorb his fare in huge, juicy chunks, instead of having to nibble it and search for the seeds. The passage quoted above is just such a soft fruit. It describes a situation to dream of. A plain bathed in palpitating sunshine, "a boy for you, a girl for me," no hostile disturber of the solitude—and, at this supreme moment, I utter the great phrase of my life—"Horses,—and chariots—of fire." The curtains sink slowly while I hold my lady in my arms, then suddenly, as though all Jove's thunderbolts had been released, there rises from all the corners of the world a roar of admiration which echoes and then dies among the distant hills. Rubbish! you say, slamming the book in superior disgust, but do you not secretly long to be the hero or heroine of such a climax?

Yes, we have touched your weakness, oh you intellectuals; you are afraid of sentimentality: all your theories about false emotion cannot place you beyond its universal influence. But your theories are the fruit of snobbery. Sentimentality is not a spurious emotion, a bastard brother of true feeling, as some would have us believe. It is an intensely human emotion, intimately linked with our self-pity, our vanity, our impossible aspirations. It humours the inoffensive weaknesses of the ordinary man, through the medium of his books, films, and plays. Essentially the emotion of youth, it accompanies the first flutterings of sex-consciousness and remains throughout life as the guardian of our most idyllic memories. By its fanciful sorcery, the typist actually becomes a movie vamp, the labourer discovers as part of his own experience the escapades of the adventure story hero. For a trivial price, this supreme retailer, sentimentality, sells a considerable amount of excitement, self-importance, and illusion. Even our griefs can be sentimentalized and softened by a parallel case in a story or scene: a seasoning of fictitious martyrdom will draw out our sorrows' sting.

This offering up of a lump in the throat at the shrine of self need be neither contemptible nor dangerous. It is the most pathetic evidence of human helplessness. We are urgently in need of something which gives a semblance of reality to our unaccomplished imaginings. The twopenny weeklies that women melt over and the songs they hum are full of the stilted language they hear fairy princess murmur to them in their dreams:

"Drift with me
Along the shores of Minnetonka
Where I first made love
To you."

Of course, that is the spirit in which one always makes love. The ideal conditions must ever be, a birch-bark canoe, silence, weeping willow trees, you and me,—and the moon. It is in the nature of men as of wolves to grow sentimental under the moon, and trash teaches us the appropriate phrases to whisper into an appreciative ear on a night of cloudless radiance.

Even the most pitiful worm of a man feels an occasional need for a daredevil adventure, and he finds in a

"thriller" what he dare not seek in action. He reads Zane Grey's "The Roaring U.P. Trail," and has become transmuted into Larry King, the strong, lawless Wild West hero, whose few words are each an imperative bark and whose only argument lies in his hip-pocket. When his friend and master is being falsely accused, he enters the room, nonchalantly takes out his revolver, and instantly the accusations freeze on terror-stricken lips. How delicious it is to be ordinary Jim Robinson and yet do such deeds, albeit only in imagination! Jim has become a swashbuckler, a rake, a brigand, a sheik—anything but the tame little domestic animal who quivers when his boss stamps, finds fault with the soup, and paces the bedroom floor in his socks while he croons nonsense songs to a debilitated baby.

There is the flavour of humankind on the spree in such stuff as this; it is closely akin to a *char-à-banc* party on Hampstead Heath on a Bank Holiday. Superficially, it is utterly remote from human experience, but the more deeply its head is hidden in a cloud of romance, the more firmly is its underlying emotion embedded in the clay of human nature.

The saddest of living poets has sung:—

"But men at whiles are sober,
And think by fits and starts,
And when they think, they fasten
Their hands upon their hearts."

Trash, however (we must call it by that name for want of a politer generic term), obviates all necessity for thought: one need only absorb it and feel it while the intellect lies fallow. It is as well that there exists some such soporific for the mind: it is a necessary antidote to the appalling drabness of life. If the servant-girl knew of nothing beyond the scrubbing of doorsteps; if the city clerk brooded for ever upon the inevitability of four walls and £4 per week; if the intellectual realized how infinitesimal would be his ultimate achievement, those of us who had shirked suicide would sink into incurable melancholia. Sentimental nonsense, whether in books, on the stage, or in our imaginations, waters our illusions and brings an occasional blossom to the dry sticks in our window-boxes.

Whatever gives comfort and relaxation to the bulk of civilized men must not be condemned in mere prejudice. In spite of motive-hunting magistrates and unco-guid busybodies who write letters to the newspapers on the corruption of the masses, we insist on calling trash an innocent amusement. The serious business of life is too insistent for our frolics to last long. During a hectic hour at the cinema a man may be ready to wreck a train and rob the passengers; but a five minutes' walk in the night air renders him content with a lawful ticket to Camden Town. The shop-girl gushes about Owen Nares, but she gives her hand and heart to a more homely-featured fellow. Widespread and stable as may be the popularity of trash, it has little power either to elevate or to corrupt. It is merely an entertainment, light enough to please the barren mind and to soothe the weary intellect. A world emancipated from trivialities and wedded to the highest in literature, art, and song is a beautiful dream, which, if at all prophetic, points to a consummation aeons away; but trash and its appeal are present realities, too big to be ignored or dismissed with a sneer. Human nature cannot afford to lose its trash. If the works of Shakespeare, Einstein, and Chopin were suddenly obliterated, some few of us would mourn, but if trash in all its aspects were utterly to disappear from our midst, it would leave a desolation like that of a nunnery.

H. MILLER.

FROM ALPHA TO OMEGA

THE Student Prince," at His Majesty's, is described as a "spectacular light opera." This, I take it, is a euphemism or Americanism for musical comedy. For "The Student Prince" is really "Old Heidelberg," which returns to London, after nearly a quarter of a century, via New York, refurbished with music by Mr. Sigmund Romberg, a great many brilliant dresses and

uniforms, and a certain amount of American humour. Mr. Rombourg justifies the "opera," the uniforms the "spectacular," and the humour the "light." The music is just a little above the musical comedy average, and there is plenty of colour, movement, and noise. The producers have had to go a long way back in time, not only for the plot, but also for some of the students' songs. It was very pleasant to rehear them. The American humour, particularly that of Mr. Oscar Figman, as Lutz, is the best thing in the play. Otherwise, the sentimentality is spread much too thick for my queasy stomach; indeed, it is so thick that dramatically the authors, to my mind, get bogged in it, for they literally dare not go through with it to the end and make the Prince marry Kathie. This was apparently not the view of the majority of the audience, who seemed to be thoroughly enjoying themselves. All the singers work hard. I thought that Miss Lucyenne Herval as Princess Margaret, though she had not one of the most important parts, made the most of it.

* * *

The play chosen for the Second Annual Entertainment of the East London College was the "Jealous Wife," by George Colman, senior, first acted at Drury Lane in 1761, with Garrick, Yates, Palmer, King, Mrs. Pritchard, Mrs. Clive, and everybody else one has ever heard of in the cast. The production, which was in the capable hands of Mr. Dobrée, could hardly have been bettered, unless indeed the play had been cut down to half its length and acted as a farce instead of as a comedy. The set was pretty, simple, and practical, much of the acting good, especially the Lady Freeloove of Miss Norma Varden (a real Restoration actress), and the Oakly (Garrick's part) of Mr. Douglas Ross, while Miss Muirhead displayed a gawky charm as Miss Russet. But the very names of the characters give the play away. We are at the end of the chapter. English comedy had come a long way. We had had in turn the roaring high spirits of Marlowe, the mephitic phantasy of Jonson, Wycherley's angry scorn, and Congreve's wistful sorrow. The sands are running out by the time we get to George Colman, who, to put it frankly, has a muddy style. The comic Irishman, the blackguard aristocrat, even the oaths and epigrams are stale with frequent use. The most original feature of the play is its heart-whole sentimentality, which made the audience yell with laughter. For sheer sentimentality the late eighteenth century left the Victorians nowhere. But somehow or other eighteenth-century sentimentality has with time become quite charming. Will the same thing happen one day to the Victorian brand?

* * *

Mr. Yosie Fujiwara, the Japanese tenor, has succeeded in doing what every Japanese artist should wish to do. He has assimilated the technique of our Western music and is presenting it with a spirit and sentiment which is new to us. His programme at the Wigmore Hall last week covered a very wide range. Eighteenth century songs by Scarlatti and Handel; old and modern Japanese music; and songs by such composers as Kreisler and Massenet. His voice was, possibly, most moving when he sang Caesar Franck's setting of the anthem "Panis angelicus fit panis hominum." It is hardly fair to say—as a musical critic has done—that Mr. Fujiwara's Japanese songs are merely Western music. The composers, MESSRS. Komatsu, Yamada, and Hirota, have certainly written their songs to fill a modern keyboard; but the spirit of such songs as "Tomari Bune" (the river boat) and "Karatachi no Hana" (the sepiaria blossom) is absolutely Japanese. They are adaptations, not copies. We suggest, however, that he might give special prominence in his programmes to such early English and foreign composers as Purcell, Arn, Rameau, and Couperin. His beautiful voice and simple, polished manners might, we think, be exceptional aids in presenting the songs of a more formal age than ours.

* * *

Mr. Cedric Morris is a painter who has shown very little of his work—of his recent work, at any rate—in

London, and who now proves himself, in his small exhibition at the Claridge Gallery, to be one of the best and most original of the younger artists. Not only is his painting extremely competent and extremely pleasing: it has sometimes, as in his picture of two jays on a nest, a fine, closely-knit solidity and a very sure sense of composition. There are several paintings of birds here, and it is perhaps in these that he achieves his most interesting designs, but some of the landscapes, especially two or three of the harbour and shipping at Newlyn, are full of charm and individuality. At the Mayor Gallery are to be seen some drawings for films and stage designs by Herr Paul Leni, the producer of "Waxworks," which was shown at the Film Society a short time ago. They are pretty drawings, translated fairly closely into the film "sets," photographs of which, in some cases, are shown alongside. It would be interesting to see plans of the intermediate, practical stage.

* * *

Things to see or hear in the coming week:—

- Saturday, February 13.—Orchestral Concert for Children, at 11, at Central Hall.
Sammons and Murdoch, at 3, at Wigmore Hall.
Popular French Art of To-day Exhibition, at Arthur Tooth & Sons.
Sunday, February 14.—James Joyce's "Exiles," Stage Society, at the Aldwych.
Film Society, at 2.30, at the New Gallery Kinema.
H. N. Brailsford on "Socialism and the Empire," at 5, at Indian Students' Union.
Monday, February 15.—Chekhov's "Uncle Vanya," at the Duke of York's.
"The Mother," at Q Theatre.
Harold Rutland and Hungarian String Quartet, at 5.30, at Wigmore Hall.
Bach Cantata Club Concert, at 8.15, at St. Margaret's, Westminster.
Tuesday, February 16.—Chekhov's "The Three Sisters," at Barnes.
Hugh Dalton on "Adam Smith and Public Finance," at 5, at London School of Economics.
Wednesday, February 17.—"Wildflower," at the Shaftesbury.
Jelly d'Aranyi and Adila Fachiri, Recital of Works for two Violins, at 8.30, at Aeolian Hall.
Thursday, February 18.—Lener String Quartet, at 8.15, at Wigmore Hall.
Friday, February 19.—"Le Sexe Injuste," matinées, at the Savoy.
Gerald Cooper Chamber Concert, at 8.30, at Aeolian Hall.

OMICRON.

THE CORRECT SOLUTION

THE swallow flew like lightning over the green
And through the gate-bars—a hand's breadth between;
He hurled his blackness at that chink and won,
The problem scarcely rose and it was done.

THE spider, chance-confronted with starvation,
Took up another airy situation;
His working legs, as it appeared to me,
Had mastered practical geometry.

THE old dog dreaming in his frowsy cask
Enjoyed his rest and did not drop his task:
He knew the person "of no fixed abode"
And challenged as he shuffled down the road.

Such creatures, which (Buffon and I agree)
Lack almost every human faculty,
Worked out the question set with satisfaction
And promptly took the necessary action.

At this successful sang-froid, I, employed
On "Who Wrote Shakespeare?", rightly felt annoyed,
And seeing an evening primrose by the fence
Beheaded it for blooming insolence.

E. BLUNDEN.

THE WORLD OF BOOKS

A MORATORIUM FOR POETRY

A POET, whose book had been reviewed by Mr. Graves in these columns, the other day wrote an interesting letter criticizing the way in which THE NATION and other weekly journals review poetry. "The response which many of the critical weeklies," he wrote, "make nowadays to the books of verse with which they are no doubt inundated seems to me to have nothing to recommend it. They respond by holding periodic exhibits of minor poetry in job lots of from five to ten, at about two inches of print per poet." I felt, as I read this criticism, that there was a good deal to say for it, but there is, perhaps, not quite so much as those might think who do not know the inside of a newspaper office, and who have never seen the table groaning under its weekly load of "books for review." The answer which immediately sprang to my mind was that the level of poetic achievement is extraordinarily stable, and, unless one were merely content to review a few well-known names, it is impossible with any fairness to single out a poet every six or eight weeks and give him or her the benefit of a column rather than two inches. However, my conscience was sufficiently tender to make me try an experiment. I gathered together a week's harvest of books of poetry, sent for review, and took them home to make a more than usually intensive study of them.

The crop consisted of nine books of poems (as well as thirteen new volumes in Messrs. Benn's sixpenny "Augustan Books of English Poetry"). In order that my cards may be all upon the table, I will give the full titles of the nine: "What's O'Clock," by Amy Lowell (Cape, 6s.); "The Bridle-Way," by the Earl of Sandwich (Elkin Mathews, 7s. 6d.); "Poems," by Mary E. Drinkwater (Simpkin, 2s. 6d.); "Collected Poems," by Teresa Hooley (Cape, 6s.); "Odes and Oddities," by A. G. Hamilton (Horseshoe Publishing Co., 2s.); "Fairies and Fantasy," by A. T. Wnyard-Wright (Horseshoe Publishing Co., 2s. 6d.); "Poems," by Lewis W. Townsend (High House Press, 3s.); "The Assaying of Brabantius," by C. S. Sherrington (Oxford University Press, 4s. 6d.); "Nature Dialogues," by N. M. Copland (Claude Stacey, 2s. 6d.). I have no possible doubt as to the order of merit of these nine books. Miss Lowell is in a class by herself; she was a serious writer who had something to say and knew how she wanted to say it. Mr. Sherrington is also a serious writer, a considerable distance below Miss Lowell, but also some distance above the other seven. Those other seven are distinguishable only by the different degrees of their pretentiousness; they are trying to write poetry without any qualifications for that arduous task—in fact their efforts can only be compared with those of a man who tried to play golf armed with a Rugby football and a billiard-cue.

These nine books have confirmed me in an opinion to which extensive reading of published and unpublished modern poetry has gradually been forcing me. It is that poets would enormously benefit their art by adopting a self-denying ordinance, a fifteen-year moratorium for poetry. The poetic currency has for many years been subjected to an appalling system of inflation; it is now thoroughly debased; under those circumstances, whether in finance or in literature, as readers of Mr. Keynes's articles in another part of this paper will understand,

the only cure is a moratorium. The poet to-day is in an impossible position. He may sit down at his table in the finest poetic fury, but once he takes his pen in hand, "poetry" is inevitably too much for him, and, before he knows what he is doing, he is handing out the old, worn, worthless coins, the flimsy, greasy poetic notes that issued years and years ago from the "Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrical Poems in the English Language." The only cure for this state of things is for poets to agree not to write any poetry for at least fifteen years—after that interval it may be possible for someone to start afresh.

* * *

The trouble at the moment is, I think, this. There is a frame of mind which nearly everyone at one time or other may get into, and which is akin to what may be called "the poetic frame of mind." In early spring, on a fine summer evening, in early love, in grief at the death of a favourite dog, at the outbreak of a great war, anyone may feel it. Fortunately—or unfortunately—dead poets have left us an infinite number of formulae of rhythms, rhymes, poetic phrases into which such feelings can be translated. The effect is disastrous upon the person who sits down to write poetry. Teresa Hooley sees a butterfly, and the formula is to hand:

"To-day I saw a butterfly,
The first-born of the spring
Sunning itself upon a bank—
A lovely tawny thing."

The Earl of Sandwich tells us:

"I fancy once I may have been
A primrose in a wood,
To venture into your demesne,
A violet's that stood
For modesty. . . ."

A fine summer day, and Mary E. Drinkwater sings:

"Roses shed their fragrance
In the summer heat,
Conjuring up romances
Which on the senses beat."

* * *

It may, of course, be said that these writers are not poets. But that would be a superficial answer. You can see the same trouble at work in Miss Lowell, and Mr. Sherrington (and John Freeman, Robert Graves, J. C. Squire, G. K. Chesterton, in Messrs. Benn's series), and in practically every serious writer of poetry to-day. Mr. Sherrington is obviously an intelligent man, with a "poetic" sense, but his poems are born dead; the accumulated weight of past poetry is too much for him, the voices of so many poets are ringing in his ears that he cannot hear his own voice, far less make us hear it. And the same is true of Miss Lowell, though she concealed it with some cleverness. Her poems are not poetry; she had some interesting ideas, which make it just possible to read her, but which might have been expressed just as well or better in prose. When she tries definitely to be poetical, she is merely poetically reminiscent. Her position shows very clearly the present state of poetry. She was at the top of her particular literary tree. She was in poetry where, say, Mr. Wells is in fiction, or Mr. Strachey in biography. But in achievement she is incomparably inferior to either of these writers. Let the poets declare a moratorium.

LEONARD WOOLF.

REVIEWS

THE OLD GODS

Zeus: a Study in Ancient Religion.—Volume II. *Zeus, God of the Dark Sky (Thunder and Lightning)*. By ARTHUR BERNARD COOK, Fellow and Lecturer of Queen's College, Cambridge; Reader in Classical Archaeology in the University of Cambridge. (Cambridge University Press. 8 guineas).

CONFRONTED by a gold-mine so rich, so extensive, as is the book before us, a mine in which he feels that he might quarry for weeks yet leave it unexhausted, the reviewer is tempted to pick out a shining nugget here and there and so earn for his reader and himself a cheap delight. But this, he knows, is no worthy treatment of a book of such serious intent and deep design. It is imperative that the main issue be tracked out and made clear. Through the tangled thicket of the trees he must pierce to the secret heart of the well-nigh impenetrable wood.

One glittering nugget, however, we will allow ourselves as talisman. *Great Pan is dead*. Yes, but why Great?—he that was a lowly goatherd daimon, never an Olympian—and why did he die, he that is alive and piping among the woodlands still? Pan was never great, and Pan never died. But a greater than Pan, *Zan the Great*, died yearly, as all the old year-gods did, and rose again in the spring-time. In Plutarch's story the pilot Thamous heard a voice bidding him, as he thought, bear the mysterious tidings *Great Pan is dead*—he mistook what was really a liturgical cry from the ritual of *Zan the Great*.

Zan was an older form of *Zeus*; his name fell into oblivion, but it lived on in obscure tradition. On the famous tomb in Crete was incised an epitaph:—

"Here lies the great *Zan* whom men call *Zeus*."

And Euripides in his *Cretans* says of *Minos*:—

"Child of Europa and of *Zan the Great*."

The epithet Great—to *Pan* most inappropriate—was proper to *Zan*. Thamous heard the voice calling from the Thesprotian shore, and this shore was peopled by an old Illyrian stock akin to the pre-Latin stock of Italy. They, too, had their earlier *Zeus*, or rather *Jupiter*, the familiar *Janus*.

With *Janus* we come right in the heart of our subject to the cardinal point on which hinges the whole of Mr. Cook's mythological discovery. *Janus* is to most of us the Janitor god of the doorway, double-faced because he looks in and out. As such he appears on the coins of Augustus and Nero. It surprises us that a mere god of the doorway should assume an importance so tremendous. Juvenal addresses him as *Janus the Father*, most ancient of the gods; in the ancient Salian hymn the dancers equate him with *Jupiter*, thus (we follow Mr. Cook's able reconstruction): "Ho, Festal *Jupiter*, ho, || Fling wide all the doors, god of the Archway || Thou art *Janus Ian*; thou art the good Creator || good *Janus* || foremost, an, thou wilt, of ancient Kings." To others he is the air, the yawning void, the power that controls the two Bears; he is god of the day, of the months, of the seasons, of the year, and finally god of eternity, *Aion* himself. How did the janitor come to be all this? The answer once stated is as simple as it is satisfactory. The doorway is no earthly portal; it is the archway of the sky, the vault of heaven itself supported on two pillars. The vault of heaven was there long before the human doorkeeper; it was, indeed, the eldest of divinities; it was the year-god, the season-god, the Father, the fertilizer. *Janus*, who is but *Dianus*, preceded *Jupiter* as *Zan* preceded *Zeus*. Each and all were but the shining vault of the sky with all its potencies, and later, men-gods with sky-functions; *Janus* lives on still, opening the year with his January month. The archway, like the god, was called *Janus*. That it was really, to begin with, no entrance door is seen by its survival, the Triumphal Arch. The arch, like the *Janus*, represented the heavenly vault, and the triumphing general, whose statue stood upon it, was viewed as an embodiment of the sky-god uplifted on his mimic sky. The Marble Arch and the Arc de Triomphe, architecturally so insignificant, put on new meaning: they are the outcome of a deep-rooted religious conviction the significance of which has dwindled till, as Mr. Cook observes, "the monument

that once stood for apotheosis now merely marks a stage for the motor-omnibus."

Most primitive religions begin with a cosmogony of some sort. The early Greeks seem to have conceived of the earth as a flat disc with a central point called its omphalos or navel, the possession of which navel was eagerly claimed by Delphi, Delos, Branchidae and other places. Over this disc, with its omphalos, hung the vault of heaven. Odd though it seems to us, primitive man was haunted by the fear that the sky would collapse on top of him. Not everyone in those days was a Horace who, though the sky should tumble about him, refused to turn a hair. There is plenty of classical evidence for this dread of the sky, and happily Mr. Cook has a daughter still young enough to read fairytales. Miss Phyllis Cook reminds her father how Henny-Penny, and Cocky-Locky went to tell the king "the sky was falling." The king was not always handy, so the practical primitive, finding his roof falling, proceeded to shore it up—first by a great central pillar, an *Irminsul*, rising from the omphalos, and next by two side pillars east and west. The *Irminsul* was probably a roof-tree to begin with, and then, when the forest was left behind, it became a sky-pillar joining earth and heaven. From the two side props sprang all the twin son-gods, the "Dioscuri" and the like.

Is this mere fancy? Let us inquire at Delphi. Here assuredly we shall find the omphalos of Earth, but what about the pillar of the sky? The Delphic omphalos is a familiar object; it is frequently figured on vases and coins, a white object shaped like a half-egg, decorated with an *agrenon* or net made of wool fillets, and sometimes by heraldic eagles. Moreover, an actual omphalos in white marble came to light many years back during the French excavations. On none of these representations is there any sign of a sky-pillar. But on coins of Byzantium Mr. Cook had observed an omphalos-like object surmounted by an *aguieus* pillar, and that raised his hopes and kept his eyes open. He had not long to wait. In September, 1913, at Delphi, a second omphalos came to light beneath the ruins of a small shrine. It now appeared that the omphalos first found was merely a marble replica ordinarily shown to Greek tourists, and was, in fact, the one seen by Pausanias himself: The real omphalos stood in a small-roofed chapel of its own with a porch in front. It is made of a block of rough limestone. On it is inscribed in archaic letters, GAS, the name of the earth goddess Ga in the genitive, and by its side the famous mystic letter E. That was luck enough!—the sort of luck that comes only to the keen-scented hound—but there was more to follow. The omphalos is pierced from top to bottom by a square hole from the edge of which projects a blade of iron that must have served to keep in place a wooden stem now lost, and it is scarcely possible to doubt that this stem was the sky-pillar, the *Aguieus*. We have only to turn the mystic E on its side, and we see in it the three sky-pillars . . . The riddle of the omphalos is read at last. We congratulate Monsieur Courley on his find, but still more Mr. Cook on his brilliant interpretation.

Gaia kept firm hold of her omphalos, but the old sky-pillar, the *Aguieus*, daimon of the archway to whom Cassandra cried, was taken over by Apollo and became his altar. The ancient cosmic cult was obscured, but Hesiod never forgot it. Before and behind *Zeus* and the Olympians stood the elder gods *Ouranos* and *Gaia*, and their son *Kronos*. Moreover—a fact full of significance—the Orphic initiate, tenacious of things primitive, avowed his divine birth in these words:—

"I am the child of Earth and of Starry Heaven."

Arrived at this exciting climax, we pause to take breath and look round. In Vol. I. we have had the full discussion of the sky-god in his bright aspect. In Vol. II. the great advance has been made that we find the sky-god as only one element in a primeval cosmogony in which there is another factor perhaps more basal, more primeval than the sky, Mother Earth herself. The rest of Vol. II. is, we find, taken up with the sky-god in his dark aspect of thunder and lightning, so we turn eagerly to the end expecting the promise of a third volume dealing with *Gaia* and all her manifold surrogates. No such thing. How is this? The Greeks knew well the primal prestige of *Gaia*. The priest-

ess in the Eumenides, coming forth from Apollo's temple, begins her prayer with the words:—

"First in my prayer, before all other Gods,
I call on Earth, primeval prophetess"—

and modern mythology has seen that all the Olympian women-goddesses, whether mother or maid, Hera, Athena, Artemis, and the like, are but the forms of old Gaia. Why this cold neglect? The reason is obvious and psychologically interesting. Mr. Cook rarely allows himself a purple patch, but here and there his style glows with a hidden fervour—the fervour of a cherished faith. He is a monotheist and an ardent Christian, and it is when and where he can see in Greek religion a forecast of Christianity that this fervour glows. No one knows better than Mr. Cook that ancient religion had its Trinity, not a male Trinity, but the Trinity of the normal family, Father, Mother, and Son. In the mysteries at Samothrace the mystics worship Axiokersa the Mother, Axiokersos the Father, Axieros the Son. Setting aside the Mother, Mr. Cook deals only with Father and Son or Sons, with Zeus and with his sons, Dionysos and Apollo. How can his monotheism tolerate two gods? Because, as he says in discussing Attis, "such beliefs naturally predisposed men to faith in that Son whom the Father sent to be 'the effulgence of his glory and the very image of his substance,'" or because more simply and more beautifully the Christ himself had said: "I and the Father are one." The father and the son, said Sir Wm. Ramsay, . . . "are merely complementary forms of the single ultimate form of the divine as male." "Well," adds Mr. Cook joyously, "might Christianity take root and flourish among a people who had already learnt that the Son was in the Father and the Father in the Son." In all this masculine elation there is no place for poor old Mother Gaia! We would not be misunderstood. Mr. Cook is constitutionally incapable of even the faintest *mala fides*. It is simply that confessional prejudice has influenced choice. Our regret is only that the scholar, and still more the student, in reading this "study in primitive religion" must carry away a distorted vision of the dominance of Father and Son among the Greeks. But, after all, Mr. Cook is yet in the full maturity of his powers, there is yet time to chant a palinode to Gaia. And anyhow, while the Orthodox Church has her Bogoroditsa and the Roman her Virgin Queen, Mother and Maid will not go unworshipped.

It would be easy to cavil at Mr. Cook's methods, at his superdyspeptic notes and his labyrinthine argument. He has not the gift of plot, but, for the argument he offers in his Retrospect some sort of clue, and for his nightmare notes he—quite vainly, we think—makes apology. We again owe thanks to Mrs. Cook for a masterly index. So why cavil? The minor blemishes are but spots in an almost dazzlingly brilliant sun.

Since the "Golden Bough" no book on mythology has appeared at all comparable in originality and weight. Cambridge may well be proud of her two great sons.

JANE HARRISON.

PUSHKIN AND GOGOL

Pushkin. By D. S. MIRSKY. (Routledge. 6s.)
Gogol. By JANKO LAVRIN. (Routledge. 6s.)

"I CONSIDER that Mr. Pushkin's aim would be attained if, with the necessary chastening, he made his comedy into an historical tale or romance after the manner of Walter Scott"—was the benign advice given to the great Russian poet about his play "Boris Godonov" by the Tsar Nicholas. The Emperor, who evidently admired the pleasing feudalism of the Scots writer, had constituted himself the direct censor of his unreliable subject. Pushkin gradually abandoned liberalism, but the cold pupil of the State, suspicious of the poetic mood, remained fixed on him. Curiously enough, a censorship, by which he was almost consigned to Siberia for a bawdy poem circulated in manuscript, improved one of his plays, and by exiling him to the South for his early "atheism," saved him from social dissipation in St. Petersburg consequent on his premature poetic success, and brought his genius to fruit.

The life of Pushkin (1799-1837) has the monotony of repetition. Proud of an Abyssinian strain which showed

distinctly in his thickness of lip and curliness of hair, the descendant of an imperial favourite of whom he has written in the well-known prose fragment, "The Negro of Peter the Great," he attributed his sensuality, complacently, to his African ancestry. His love-affairs appear to have been countless, for the serious romances which Prince Mirsky describes, in a calm Continental manner, are numerous. The lack of moral comment, so essential in biographies of the wilder English poets, is notable. The book is admirable; biographical and literary details are combined in a simple, straightforward style. Necessarily, the study must suffer from vagueness, for most readers cannot be acquainted with the original poems. The abstract style of French poetry, before the Parnassians, is difficult enough to convey in English; the Russian lyric evades even Mr. Baring. The lyrical poetry of Pushkin has, for theme, the great emotional commonplaces; as Raphael, the Russian generalizes and idealizes the individual experience. Adjectival description of his lyric style merely stimulates appetite: we are invited to the banquet once more, but the meats, fruit, and vodka never appear. The influence of Byron on Pushkin is well-known, and therefrom sprang his series of semi-Asiatic narratives. His great novel in verse, "Eugene Oneguine," was suggested by "Don Juan," but this metrical study of contemporary Russian life in the capital and the provinces, is not satirical, but precise and later in style: it is, in fact, the progenitor of the Russian novel familiar to us; from the conclusion, in which Oneguine and Tatiana reveal, after years, their love for one another, yet part, sprang the muffled unsatisfying ending, practised most consistently by Turgenev. The fecundity of the poet in lyric, epic, drama, and prose exemplary novels, is amazing: to a foreigner he suggests, except in his last phase, Hugo. More from honour, perhaps, than affection, he challenged an admirer of his wife, and was killed in duel: but in him Russian imagination, confined by classical French influence in the eighteenth century, came to what appears sudden consciousness.

The frank and fine needs of the "Republic of Letters" series have confined Mr. Lavrin's psycho-analytic tendencies within reasonable limit in his study of Gogol. Comparison between Pushkin, romantic, expansive, Apollonian, and Gogol, the father of the realistic novel, morbid, minute, ironical, is tempting: if the poet was social, amorous, calm, the prose-writer was diffident, solitary, and regarded women with the suspicion of the early theologians. In Gogol, Mr. Lavrin finds inverted romanticism. He traces the stigmata of secretive practices in his work. In a typical analysis of an early story, "The Viy," a retold folk-tale from Gogol's native Ukraine, which has the weird power of Hoffman or Poe, he discovers a significant choice of theme and symbol: "the gruesome Viy, with clots of earth clinging to him and with eyes which bring death when they see, expresses certain subconscious fears and terrors of Gogol himself—terrors and fears connected with his abnormal erotic habits. And his vision of the monsters that remained stuck fast in the doors and windows of God's sanctuary is perhaps not quite casual either: Gogol's life was a long and painful effort to free his own soul from those monsters of imperfection which remained stuck in it and haunted his morbid imagination with all the horrors of eternal doom." Mr. Lavrin seems to read backward into Gogol the characteristics of his successors, as well as the distressing religious mania of his later years. But one cannot deduce from Tolstoi's "Parables" his "War and Peace." The fantastic reality of the "Cloak," the veiled satire upon officialdom, provincialism, and snobbery in the play, "The Inspector-General," the wonderful comprehensiveness, detail, and irony of "Dead Souls," Gogol's masterpiece, will seem to justify one's impression of sheer art and scientific methods of observation: and his own words were, "I never created anything out of mere imagination, only in those things was I successful which I took from reality and which were based on the data I knew. I could fathom a man then only when I had seen all the minutest details of his exterior. Yet I never painted a portrait by simply copying it. I created portraits, but I created them on the ground of consideration rather than on that of mere imagination." To Mr. Lavrin, "Dead Souls," despite superficial objectivity, is supremely subjective. To those who have enjoyed Gogol for his deliciously sly irony, shrewdness, and power of constructing by sheer detail, the undercurrent of subjective views in this study will be, at least, stimulating.

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The Adventure of Wrangel Island. By VILHEJALMUR STEFANSSON. (Cape. 18s.)

THIS is a book of controversy rather than of adventure. It is true that, buried within its four hundred solid and heavily documented pages, there is a simple story of human endurance and tragedy. But the volume is largely concerned with an examination of the mystery surrounding that tragedy, and, for the rest, with tangled political and technical issues. As in his previous books, Mr. Stefansson declaims vigorously against the idea that Arctic exploration is merely a more thrilling and dangerous form of sport than mountaineering, in which the actors (or "heroes") seek to establish new records for their own glory. He insists that he and his associates have always regarded it from a purely practical standpoint, and several introductory chapters are devoted to a restatement of his ideas and aims. He maintains that the public has a complete misconception of the climate and resources of the Far North, and prophesies that in time the polar regions will boast a new empire covering an area two-thirds again as large as that of the United States. "Stefansson," says a friend who contributes a chapter to the present book, "thinks in terms of continents and centuries. He sees the Arctic spanned by a network of aerial routes, with great air-vessels flying on regular time-tables over vast expanses filled with grazing herds. He watches the frontier-line of human life moving ever northward from the present overcrowded centres of population."

If this theory be accepted, it is obvious that some of the Arctic islands would have peculiar strategic and other value, and it was with a view to establishing the British claim to Wrangel—the right to which is examined in detail—that Stefansson in 1921 sent out a party of four young Canadians, with one Esquimaux woman, to occupy that island for a time. The story of that ill-fated expedition is based upon the diary of Lorne Knight, one of the four men, and is elaborately annotated by Mr. Stefansson himself. At first all went well, and, though a relief ship dispatched in 1922 failed to reach the island, the author is convinced that tragedy would have been averted had not Knight and his companions, for reasons which can only be conjectured, started out across the ice, in 1923, in an attempt to reach Siberia. After a first unsuccessful effort, the party returned to their camp; but later the endeavour was renewed, though this time Knight and the woman, in order to lighten the burden on the sled, remained on the island. There, after his associates must have met their fate in a storm of unusual violence, Knight died of sickness; and when at last a ship, under Mr. Harold Noice, gained the island, the Esquimaux woman was found to be the sole survivor.

The diary of Lorne Knight, the last pages of which are mysteriously missing, is a plain, unemotional record, though, as death creeps slowly upon him, the courage of the writer shines out clearly enough through his restraint. But Knight's narrative is too fragmentary to throw much light upon the controversy in which it is enveloped. It is impossible here to enter into all the complexities and ramifications of the argument between Mr. Stefansson and Mr. Noice. But, in essence, it amounts to a discussion as to whether, as Mr. Noice originally asserted—though he subsequently withdrew some of his statements—Knight's party attempted to reach the mainland because Wrangel could no longer supply them with food, or whether, as Mr. Stefansson thinks, they were merely actuated by a natural desire to resume intercourse with civilization. If the latter be the true explanation, then the adequacy of the resources of Wrangel—which apparently it is Mr. Stefansson's desire to establish—is not impugned.

It is natural that Mr. Stefansson, who was responsible for the expedition, should wish to clear up the mystery and to refute misrepresentations. But in his maze of arguments, documents, press-cuttings, and appendices—not to mention the further entanglements of his negotiations with various Governments, and the disputes of those Governments between themselves—the ordinary layman loses himself in weariness and perplexity. There is much of incidental interest in the book. But it is questionable whether many readers will attach so much importance to its controversial aspects as the author himself may be pardoned for doing.

EVOLUTION AND CANCER

Malignancy and Evolution. By MORLEY ROBERTS. (Nash & Grayson. 18s.)

The great development of biological science within the last generation, while it has resulted in the recording of innumerable observations, has produced no generalization of the first magnitude. The Darwinians and the Lamarckians still wage their wordy battle as to the causes of evolution. With the increase of knowledge, the man of science has been forced to become more and more of a specialist, and, so far is he from being able, like Darwin, to speak with authority on three sciences, that all he can hope to do is to master one particular branch of one science, with but a passing acquaintance with the work that is being done in other branches of his own science, and possibly no knowledge whatever of other sciences. He finds it difficult to see the wood for the trees and to recognize the fundamental processes which must eventually be revealed by a proper study of the vast accumulation of undigested facts.

This, Mr. Morley Roberts in his very stimulating book has attempted to do. He handles a great mass of evidence in a most able fashion, and, although it is not possible to agree with all his conclusions, yet there can be few workers in science who can read this book without gaining a clearer idea of the fundamental unity of science. Perhaps no branch of biology is more isolated than pathology; its workers have taken little account of the investigations of physiologists or zoologists, who in turn have neglected the findings of the pathologist. The study of cancer has been almost exclusively in the hands of pathologists, the majority of whom regard cancer as a diseased condition which has little or no connection with the normal functioning of the body. Mr. Roberts makes a strong plea for the study of cancer as a great biological problem, and urges that the direction of research should no longer be exclusively in the hands of pathologists and surgeons. In this we heartily concur; cancerous growths are the result of derangements in the balanced functioning of the different organs, as to the causes of which the physiologist and the zoologist have as much concern as the pathologist.

Mr. Roberts regards the tissues of an organism as being in a state of "hostile symbiosis" to one another. Each tissue produces secretions or excretions which would be toxic to the other tissues if these had not acquired immunity, in the same way that the lining of the alimentary canal has acquired immunity from the action of the digestive ferments. The discovery of the endocrine organs has shown that secretions or "hormones" from the pituitary, thyroid, adrenals, &c., are responsible for the harmonious development of the organism, while research in tissue culture (of the findings of which Mr. Roberts makes too little use) has revealed that a highly differentiated tissue like the kidney can only be maintained in the presence of connective tissue which presumably produces some necessary stimulant. In the healthy organism, the various tissues by their secretions act upon and react to one another so that a perfect balance is attained. If, however, the balance is destroyed, the highly differentiated epithelial cells may be unable to maintain their high organization and "de-differentiate" into simpler cells, which, in their efforts to obtain food, destroy the connective tissue. Thus he accounts for carcinomata, while sarcomata are produced by the over-stimulation of the connective tissue repair system. Mr. Roberts has a well-founded disbelief in the infection theory of cancer; though bacteria may occasionally be present, they are never the final cause of cancer, which may be experimentally produced in their absence by irritation.

There is little space in which to discuss Mr. Roberts's views on the bearing of malignancy on evolution. He believes that all variations are in the first place injurious and must be "physiologized" if the animal is to survive. He has no belief in the spontaneous advantageous variations of Darwin, and is more in agreement with Lamarck, although he seems to have little knowledge of modern work on heredity, sex determination, and the chromosome theory of inheritance, and is in danger of putting too much weight on deductions from abnormal conditions. He is on safer ground when stressing the influence of the "internal environment" of hormones on the germ cells. It may be that a reconciliation of the views of Darwin and Lamarck is to be found along these lines.

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A PROBLEM AND ITS SOLUTION

Why China Sees Red. By PUTNAM WEALE. (Macmillan. 12s.)

This book stands high above the welter of propagandist and partisan literature on the Chinese question. Prejudice has been put aside and a wider view has been substituted for the narrow conceptions which have all too frequently carried conviction by reason of their plausibility. Factors vital to the issue, essential to the most elementary grasp of present affairs in the Far East, are here for the first time presented clearly and without bias. It is strange that, with so many writers on a single subject, obvious facts should have remained unnoticed for so long. Mr. Putnam Weale startles the reader by the simplicity of his exposition; the problem is admittedly difficult; it is assumed that the solution will be found by devious, intricate ways.

In the beginning of his first chapter, "The Four Corners of the Problem," the author makes his apology in these terms:—

"I find it very difficult to put in a reasonable and enlightening form the strange condition which has arisen in China. While a mere recital of events is an easy and mechanical task, to show the working of each particular element, to find what really lies behind it, and to combine it all without prejudice into a complete synthesis is a very different matter. All the world knows that something has taken place in China which has raised a great storm of passion and made it a matter of perplexity for the best political minds to know how to restore calm. But beyond this generality, the specific causes are disputed even by those on the spot, although their correct valuation and honest treatment alone can bring appeasement."

He then proceeds to analyze the whole question. As chapter succeeds chapter, the problem is seen to be complex on account of its very simplicity. The play is re-enacted from the beginning, scene by scene; the actors are shown in the full glare of the spot-light, their aspirations, their tragic successes and equally tragic failures are scrutinized and explained. In Chapter III. is to be found a ready answer to those who insist that China has "gone Red"; there is shown "the nature of the Red failure, and the manner in which Sovietism has gone into small 'pockets,' because China is a barrier as unshakable as a fortress of mud." Special chapters are devoted to the parts played by the student movement and the Chinese Press. Then follows perhaps the most significant chapter of all, "The Japanese as Political Seers," where Japan's part in the present *débâcle* is critically examined. One section is devoted to a thorough review of the question of "unequal treaties," and another to the so-called "American plan." The inapplicability of this plan to the affairs of any nation save America is clearly demonstrated, and the burden it would place on Chinese institutions, unfitted to discharge even their present duties, needs no illustration. Photographs of leading generals and the scenes of conflict lend an added interest to this work, which is as refreshing in style as it is well balanced in judgment. All who wish to know the true history of Modern China and the Far Eastern struggle for the Balance of Power should read Mr. Weale's book.

FROM LYING TO MURDER

Liars and Fakers. By PHILIP W. SERGEANT. (Hutchinson. 18s.)

Murder in Fact and Fiction. By CANON J. A. R. BROOKES. (Hurst & Blackett. 12s. 6d.)

FICTION is stranger than truth, and a great deal more attractive—especially in the world of crime. Raffles and Mrs. Cheyney live only on the stage, and even the historical Dick Turpin was no more than a common horse-thief. As for Dr. Titus Oates, by whom Mr. Sergeant deals fairly in his interesting new book, he was a most unpleasant person; and if he won the idolatry of the citizens of London, it was less by personal charm than by playing on their unreasoning fear of Papists. For his own mother admitted that as a child "his nose always run, and he slabbered at the mouth, and his father could not endure him; and would cry 'take this snotty fool away and jumble him about,' which made me often weep, because, you know, he was my child." While

Mr. Attorney Jeffreys, in his nasty, emphatic way, called him "a shame to mankind . . . the blackest and most perjured villain that ever appeared upon the face of the earth"—and the "most obstinately hardened wretch" that he had ever seen. He was so ugly, stupid, and cruel, that it is difficult to feel pity for his brutal punishment.

But in the early life of "Duke" Dangerfield—Oates's contemporary and rival perjurer—there is a spice of picaresque romance, telling of strange ventures in Grand Cairo and Scanderboon, and how a gaoler's daughter was plunged in boiling oil for uttering false guineas. Unhappily, Dangerfield's autobiography reads like fiction only because it is fiction; but he really was more intelligent than Oates, being such a "Fourb of bright parts" that he imposed upon that serious, sensible woman Mrs. Cellier, "the Popish midwife." She was a sincere Roman Catholic, who busied herself about exposing a "Presbyterian Plot" which should rival Oates's mare's nest in panicking the crowd; and when Dangerfield turned King's evidence against her, she haughtily denounced him as a "bloody villain . . . one of the Devil's slaves."

The two other "Liars and Fakers" in the book are Young Ireland, forger of Shakespeariana; and Psalmanazar—or Psalmanazaar, as he sometimes more picturesquely spelt it—who called himself a Formosan, and invented a history, folk-lore, and language for that far land. These two faked both for profit and pleasure, and were merely practical jokers on a large scale.

But as, at a sheep-dog trial, the obstinate imbecility of the sheep amazes more than the dogs' intelligence, so the most striking thing in all these stories is not the cunning of the liars, but the gullibility of their public.

Canon Brookes writes of murderers more direct, but no more fatal, than Titus Oates. He prefaces his selection of sordid crimes by an irrelevant preface which points the moral that "the critic, who professes to find in minor poets like Yeats, Thompson, and Bottomley, the superior of Tennyson, or who admires the crude and ungainly sculptures of Rodin and Epstein more than the immortal works of Phidias and the Greeks, is guilty not only of bad taste, but of bad politics." But this outburst belies the impartiality of the rest of the book, which is so far from Conservatism that it unhesitatingly numbers General Dyer among political murderers. Although Canon Brookes indulges himself in psychological generalizations and moral precepts, his interest in crime is of the chamber-of-horrors school, which panders to the sensation-hunting instinct in himself and his readers. He nurses no romantic illusions about murderers; but though he does not love the criminal, he dearly loves his crime, in all its dirty and crude details. Even so, he has not made "an amazing horrid book"—but merely a cheap and nasty one.

ON THE EDITOR'S TABLE

MESSRS. DUCKWORTH publish a new edition in one volume of "Wanderings in Arabia," by Charles M. Doughty (12s. 6d.). This is the abridged edition of the famous "Travels in Arabia Deserta," and was first published in 1908.

The following are some historical or semi-historical books worth noting: "America and Belgium," by Thomas K. Gorman (Fisher Unwin, 15s.), a study of the influence of the United States upon the Belgian Revolution of 1789-1790; "The Rise of the Spanish Empire, Vol. III., The Emperor," by R. Bigelow Merriman (Macmillan, 24s.); "History of Russia," by S. F. Platonov (Macmillan, 14s.); "Prehistoric and Roman Wales," by R. E. M. Wheeler (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 18s.); "The Making of the English Constitution," by Albert Beebe White, second edition (Putnam, 12s. 6d.); "Builders of the Empire," by J. A. Williamson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 7s. 6d.).

Among books of a religious or semi-religious character are: "Jesus the Nazarene—Myth or History?" by Maurice Goguel, translated by Frederick Stephens (Fisher Unwin, 12s. 6d.); "The Origin of Islam and its Christian Environment," by Richard Bell (Macmillan, 10s. 6d.); "Mystical Phenomena," by Mgr. Albert Farges, translated by S. P. Jacques (Burns, Oates & Washbourne, 17s. 6d.); "Medita-

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tions on Various Aspects of Spiritual Life," by Sadhu Sundar Singh (Macmillan, 2s. 6d.).

"Arabian Medicine and its Influence on the Middle Ages," by Dr. Donald Campbell (Kegan Paul, two vols., 21s.), is published in Trübner's Oriental series.

The following are books on miscellaneous subjects: "The Underworld," by Ashton Wolfe (Hurst & Blackett, 18s.), which contains reminiscences and adventures in many lands; "Night Life—London and Paris—Past and Present," by Ralph Nevill (Cassell, 16s.); "London's Lost Theatres of the Nineteenth Century," by Erroll Sherson (Bodley Head, 18s.); and "The Happy Fisherman," by Walter M. Gallichan (Heath Cranton, 10s. 6d.), which contains reminiscences of fifty years with the rod.

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* * *

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BOOKS IN BRIEF

Collected Essays. Vols. I. and II. By SAMUEL BUTLER. (Cape, £1 1s. each.)

These are volumes eighteen and nineteen in the Shrewsbury Edition of Butler's complete works. They contain twenty-two essays. Ten have already appeared in one or other of the volumes of Butler's collected essays previously published. Of the remaining twelve, four appeared in journals, and seven have not previously been published. It cannot be said that the new material is very important: sometimes, as in "Life and Habit, vol. 2," it is the rejected material from a book actually published (in this case "Luck or Cunning?"); in others, e.g., "Cresus's Kitchen-Maid," it is the tentative draft or drafts of an essay which was never completed. But the old material contains that superb essay, "The Aunt, the Nieces, and the Dog."

* * *

Americana, 1925. Edited by H. L. MENCKEN. (Hopkinson, 7s. 6d.)

Mr. Mencken is carrying on a courageous guerilla warfare against the forces of reaction and obscurantism, which, at the moment, seem to have America in their clutches. The book, which has appeared in parts in *THE AMERICAN MERCURY*, consists of cuttings or copies of notice-boards collected by his active lieutenants in all parts of the States. It makes devastating reading: at one moment we are "tickled to death" by some idiocy, at another plunged into horror. The satirical remarks which head the extracts drive home the blows, which are directed mainly at Ku-Klux-Klan, Prohibition, prudery, and anti-scientists. The book, as Mr. Mencken claims, is a social document of great value, but he warns us that it is true only for 1925. For the British reader there is a glossary at the end. How far this method will remedy the ills it is hard to say. The 100 per cent American will hardly read it; but it is to be hoped that this plucky, bitter effort will bear some fruit. It would be instructive if someone were to do the same for this country: but if it might make us a little less superior and complacent, at least we should be spared the abominations due to colour-hatred. But that would be none of our fault.

* * *

The Town Labourer, 1760-1832. The New Civilisation. By J. L. HAMMOND and BARBARA HAMMOND. (Longmans, 6s. 6d.)

Mr. and Mrs. Hammond have written a very interesting, and all too short, preface to the new edition of their well-known work. They briefly review the controversy which has taken place, since the original publication in 1917, on the question whether the first results of the Industrial Revolution were deplorable. Their book has often been criticized on the ground that it understates the horrors of life before, and overstates those during and after, the Revolution. Mr. and Mrs. Hammond deal with the most important arguments which have been advanced against them, but they see no reason to modify the general picture drawn in this book.

* * *

Soils and Fertilizers. By A. J. MACSELF. (Thornton Butterworth, 6s.)

This is one of Mr. Macself's best books yet published by him in the "Home Garden Books" series. Many amateur gardeners foolishly think that the subject of this book is beyond them as being too "scientific"; the most that they do is a perfunctory routine digging and the dumping of some stable manure into the earth of their garden. They could often improve the productivity of their garden a hundredfold by listening to Mr. Macself's advice. There is nothing very difficult or abstruse about what he has to say. How to dig the earth, to drain it, and to get the best out of each kind of soil; how to manure it, and to put the best kind of fertilizers into it; how to deal with insect pests; these are the kind of questions which he deals with shortly and clearly.

* * *

A German-English Dictionary. By HERMAN C. G. BRANDT. (New York: Stechert.)

There is room for a good German-English dictionary of moderate size and easy to handle. Dr. Brandt's book is convenient to use, and the information is well set out, not too much being included under each word and the printing being good. There are, however, some almost insuperable difficulties in the way of producing a concise German dictionary of this kind; for instance, the extraordinary number of different meanings which are attached to so many words in German makes it inevitable that a good many meanings are omitted in order to keep the dictionary within moderate dimensions.

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NEW GRAMOPHONE RECORDS

MOZART. Symphony (No. 39) in E flat. Orchestra of the State Opera House, Berlin: Conductor, Dr. Weissman. (Parlophone. Three 12 in. records, E10392, 10393, 10394. 4s. 6d. each.)

This is the first of the three symphonies which Mozart completed in the year 1788, the last being the "Jupiter." It combines simplicity with great beauty and subtlety with grace. There are few people who will not appreciate the charm of the fourth movement. It is very well conducted and played by Dr. Weissman and the Berlin State Opera House Orchestra. The recording on these Parlophone records is admirable, and it is rare to find such satisfactory orchestral records. There is very little of the confusion which so often occurs when wind instruments and strings are recorded simultaneously. The instruments are each and all consistently audible—which cannot often be said of orchestral records. The third movement (minuet and trio) is particularly brilliant, and the fourth is also excellent. The first movement (adagio introduction followed by allegro) occupies both sides of the first record, the second movement (andante) both sides of the second, while the third (menuetto allegro) occupies one side of the third record, and the fourth (allegro) the other.

WAGNER. "Tristan and Isolde." Introductions to Acts I. and III. Orchestra of the State Opera House, Berlin: Conductor, Ed. Moerike. (Parlophone. Two 12 in. records, E10390 and 10391. 4s. 6d. each.)

The first record and one side of the second contain the introduction to Act I., and the other side of the second record contains the introduction to Act III. The playing is good, but the recording is uneven. In the introduction to Act I. the first and last sides are in the main excellent, but the middle is not satisfactory. This is due to the fact that the wood-wind is very good and the strings are good individually, but that in passages where anything like the full orchestra is playing, as in the middle, there is considerable confusion. Expert opinion differs on the subject, but in our experience orchestral records of Wagner more often suffer from this defect than almost any other composer. Wherever the volume of sound is great, the instruments are not properly differentiated, and the result is a mere blur of sound. On these records, it is true, this happens only occasionally in the middle. The introduction to Act III. is, indeed, very good, though it is, of course, mainly not orchestral at all: the famous solo for the *cor anglais* is admirably played, and the recording is here excellent.

SCHUBERT. "Wiegenlied, Schlafe Schlafe." "Nacht und Traum." Sung by Emmy Bettendorf, with Piano accompaniment. (Parlophone. One double-sided 12 in. record. 4s. 6d.)

Two very beautiful songs of Schubert's, admirably recorded. The first is a lullaby or cradle-song (there is a misprint in the German name on the label), which has few equals. It is sung beautifully by Emmy Bettendorf. She has a very fine soprano voice which has the additional and most important merit of recording perfectly. It is at its best in "Nacht und Traum," both for purity and smoothness. It is a pleasure to hear so good a singer perform without fuss or affectation.

PALESTRINA. "Confitebor Tibi." "Bonum Est." Sung by the Sistine-Vatican Choir: Conducted by Monsignore Casimiri. (Parlophone. One double-sided 12 in. record. 4s. 6d.)

In this country it is rarely, if ever, possible to hear Palestrina's sixteenth-century music as it should be heard, i.e., unaccompanied by the organ and sung by a properly trained choir. This record is not entirely satisfactory, but it does enable one to get some idea of the elaborate magnificence of the music when sung by a large, unaccompanied choir in an adequate building. The difficulties of recording for the gramophone are great. When all the voices come in, the mere volume of sound is tremendous, and few machines are capable of successfully dealing with it without "blasting." On this record, where there are not too many voices singing, the effect is often superb, but in other passages, where the full choir is singing (the voices, as it were, singing against one another), the effect is sometimes blurred. In this respect, the "Confitebor Tibi" is better than the "Bonum Est." The volume of sound in the latter is really terrific, particularly if it be played in a smallish room.

TRAVEL NOTES

THE desire to travel is doubtless as old as man. In every age and country it claims its victims, whether they be prince or commoner. The princes who travel are hailed as ambassadors of commerce, but what of the commoners who feel the desire to travel insistent? A good deal is heard of the educational value of travel, and of its prime necessity if we are to develop an international outlook on affairs. What practical steps are taken to bring this to fruition?

The post-war days and the exchange rates have doubtless stimulated this desire, and many people are taking their yearly holidays abroad who at other times would turn to the islands off the west coast of Scotland, or the Highlands, the Lake District or the dales of the North. "If I can as cheaply visit Paris as the North, why not visit Paris while the advantageous rates hold?" must be the question that many people ask themselves.

And industrial organizations and the large stores are supporting this very reasonable question. Many of them are emphasizing the educational advantages of foreign travel and giving special facilities to their employees. One large West-End store arranges tours in Switzerland and the Continent for parties of its employees at very modest rates. There are innumerable facilities, however, for the ordinary layman to travel abroad at advantageous rates.

It is the special function of these notes to help the ordinary reader; to put him in touch with the innumerable travel organizations that exist, and to provide short travel sketches to excite his interest that may, perhaps, lead him to turn towards those countries when he desires to go holidaying.

* * *

"Travel," says Bacon, "in the younger sort is a part of education: in the elder a part of experience." How many people realize that, for instance, it is possible to cross the Atlantic, to visit the Niagara Falls, to see New York, and traverse the 6,000 miles again across the Atlantic in the short space of a month and for a modest £40? And yet it can be done. This is but one of the very many attractive tours that are available to-day.

* * *

How many travel vignettes are hidden away in letters from friends, I wonder? Tucked away in a drawer or bureau they are forgotten until, perchance, we accidentally turn them out when a passion for orderliness overtakes us. Yet I am sure that they contain material for many excellent travel sketches.

I have one before me from a friend on a cycling holiday who crossed France equipped with a bicycle and a tent. He hints at the sights he passed:

"The Roman remains of Provence—arenas, theatres, circuses, temples, bridges, and aqueducts, mediæval fortresses, and palaces, and the magnificent series of chateaux of the Loire, while every stage of ecclesiastical, as well as secular architecture, is exemplified. It embraces such varied types of country as the Mediterranean and the semi-tropical South, the snowcapped mountains around Grenoble and Mont-Blanc, quiet, beautiful river scenery such as the Loire, and the wilder grandeur of such gorges as the Ardeche, together with the distinctive countryside of central France and Brittany."

"After such a tour one's mind is filled with numberless pictures, each of which is 'a possession for ever.'"

Then there comes this little sketch, full of interest and suggestion:

"Our best camping-site during the whole tour was on the banks of the Loire, not far from Angers. In the evening we went round to the inn and found a lively time proceeding. . . . Seldom have we met with greater hospitality; notwithstanding our bad French and the fact that we were foreigners, they welcomed us into their family and the village rejoicings. Into the little inn there poured all our host's friends, many of them bringing flowers in honour of the children, which they gave not to them, but to their mother. All the men were eager to tell us of their war experiences (a bond which we found throughout our tour), many of them treasuring soiled, crumpled photographs and addresses of British Tommies. Healths were drunk, and several guests sang; my friend, being at last pressed into service, contributed the only English song they knew, and could join in—'Tipperary.' Then, after many a good wish and handshake, we left for camp, and by the still waters of the Loire were lulled to sleep by the croaking of countless frogs."

* * *

I propose to give two illustrated Travel Books for the two best travel sketches or descriptions sent in by readers. They are Picture Guides, issued by the Medici Society, and will make a valuable addition to anyone's travel collection. Address them to me, at THE NATION offices.

THE TRAVELLER.

FINANCIAL SECTION

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

LIQUIDATION—CITY OF LONDON BREWERY—AUSTRIAN STERLING BONDS.

LIQUIDATION is the order of the day in most speculative markets. According to the INVESTOR'S CHRONICLE the index of "second-class" business securities (that is, business other than home rails, banks, and insurance companies) declined between December 31st and January 30th from 120.2 to 118.8, and that of speculative securities from 146.2 to 140.1. Outstanding are a decline in the rubber index from 248.3 (its peak) to 220.2, in tin shares from 190.0 to 175.7 (the index for Siamese fell from 342.5 to 302.8), in oil shares from 137.8 to 128.3, and in silk shares from 224.2 to 202.6. Liquidation in oil shares has been of a depressing nature. At the time of writing, British Controlled Common shares are down to 11s. 6d., which is probably still too high an estimate of their speculative value. When shares have been held by taxi-drivers, barbers, and undergraduates, the fall becomes precipitate in a period of liquidation. Further, the much-advertised dispute among the directors of the V.O.C. Holding does not assist the oil share market. Crude oil prices have risen in America, but the public is not taking a hand in the oil market in London. Recovery was shown last month only in the shipping group (85.8 to 100.4), coal (74.9 to 77.1), and gas, light and electricity (121.0 to 123.8). The industrial markets are still, however, suffering from the bullishness that was prevalent before Christmas. Whenever a share promptly declines on the declaration of a good dividend it is an unmistakable sign that tired bulls have given up the game. We had the spectacle of Imperial Tobacco declining to 103s. 9d. on the declaration of an increased dividend. City of London Brewery dropped to 66s. on the declaration of a satisfactory "final" of 15 per cent., making a total distribution of 20 per cent. for the year. Harrods eased to 4s. 6d. on the announcement of an increased dividend of 12 per cent. final. Lloyds' Bank shares developed weakness on receipt of a bonus of one new £1 share for every ten.

* * *

The gilt-edged market continues firm for the time, but the foreign market has become the centre of interest. The best of the new issues have been strong—German potash at 99½, Hungarian Land Mortgage at 96½, San Paulo Coffee at 97½. The improvement in the Greek Exchange, following the forced loan, has sent the 7 per cent. Greek Refugee Loan up from 90 to 92½. Czechoslovakian 8 per cent. Loan has been dealt in up to 105½. Brazilian stocks have continued their upward movement. The new Chilean 6 per cent. Loan has been firm at 94½. The sabre-rattling of Signor Mussolini has not frightened the foreign market. The Stock Exchange, it must be confessed, sets a high value upon dictators provided they are firmly seated, efficient, and economic of the public funds. If General Pangalos qualifies in the Mussolini class, the Greek 7 per cent. Refugee Loan will improve further.

* * *

There is a curious feature about the City of London Brewery profits which has escaped general attention. The balance-sheet at December 31st, 1925, disclosed an apparent decline in gross revenue as will be seen from the following table:—

| | Dividends and Interest on Investments and Brewing. | Interest on Loans and Rent. | Miscellaneous. |
|------|--|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| 1924 | 213,419 | 213,812 | 1,608 |
| 1925 | 199,790 | 197,972 | 1,616 |

The brewing profit is down because of the increase in the cost of malt, but the decline in the dividends and interest is due, we believe, to a change in accounting rather than in actual earnings. The Company holds all the Ordinary shares (13,000 shares of £10 each), and 90 per cent. of the Preference shares (14,000 6 per cent.

shares of £10 each) of Nalder & Collyer's Brewery Company, Limited, of Croydon. The earnings of this Company last year increased. On July 2nd, 1925, Nalder & Collyer's declared a final dividend in respect of the year ended March 25th, 1925, of 25 per cent., less tax, against 15 per cent., free of tax, last year, and placed £50,000 to reserve. Nalder & Collyer's interim dividend is paid in December, and is included in the City of London Brewery's accounts which close on December 31st. Now in the previous year Nalder & Collyer's declared a bonus in July and another bonus with the interim dividend in December, so that the City of London Brewery had two bonuses in one year's accounts. This year the bonus was not paid by the Nalder & Collyer's with the final dividend in July. City of London Brewery's revenue position is, therefore, stronger than it appears in the accounts. Further, there remains the speculative interest of the old City of London Brewery's site. This site is now in the course of development as Thames-side wharves and warehouses, whereas the City of London Brewery has not yet expressed in its balance-sheet the increased value of this asset. There is, in other words, a hidden reserve in the item of freehold and leasehold property and plant which stands in the balance-sheet at £1,591,407.

* * *

A fair indication of the improvement in the general European situation, and, in particular, in the credit of Austria during the last eighteen months, can be gauged from the rise in the value of certain Austrian Bonds. Details of these 5 per cent. ten-year Federal Bonds of the Austrian Republic (Series 1922, 1923, 1924) were given in this column in the issue of November 15th, 1924. At that time these bonds stood at about 64, and at the present time the price is about 75. Even at the latter price there is a running yield of 6½ per cent., and a yield to maturity allowing for an average life of eight and a-half years of 9½ per cent. In the absence of a quotation on the Stock Exchange, and therefore of a free market, these particular Bonds are unsuitable for the average investor, but in view of their comparatively short life, and the fact that they are a direct obligation of the Austrian Republic, they have a just claim to professional attention. These Bonds were issued in order to liquidate pre-war credit and debit balances abroad of Austrian nationals. The Austrian Government took over all these balances through a Clearing Office, and satisfied those who had credit balances by the issue of 5 per cent. ten-year Sterling Bonds, redeemable either by purchase or drawings. They are a direct obligation of the Austrian Republic and are additionally secured by the income which the State derives from the payments of those nationals whose debit balances abroad were settled by the Austrian Clearing Office. The sums accruing from such payments are exclusively allocated towards redemption and service of the bonds in question until the whole of the bonds outstanding have been redeemed. There are issued thirteen series of £100,000 each, and a further amount—which is estimated by authorities at not more than £400,000—can be created, which would complete the clearing of pre-war engagements. The Government has the right to accelerate redemption.

* * *

Interest and principal of these bonds are payable in sterling or in kroner at the option of the Government, at the average rate quoted in Vienna for cheque London on the due date. Interest is paid half-yearly, on March 1st and September 1st, at the Central State Paying Office in Vienna, without any deduction for taxes, charges, or other duties. The option of the Government to pay in kroner might at first sight appear to imply an exchange "risk" for a foreign holder, but this is not in

LLOYDS BANK, LTD.

MR. BEAUMONT PEASE HOPEFUL.

The sixty-eighth ordinary general meeting of Lloyds Bank, Ltd., was held on Friday, February 5th, at the Cannon Street Hotel, E.C.

Mr. J. Beaumont Pease (the Chairman) said that the profit and loss figures stood at £2,569,366, which, after making allowance for the allocation last year of £100,000 to the Widows' and Orphans' Fund, represented an increase of £200,000, as compared with a year ago. The directors proposed to place £250,000 to Premises Account, £400,000 to the Staff Superannuation Fund, and to pay the same dividend as previously, carrying forward a slightly larger balance than the one brought in. He thought it would be agreed that the balance-sheet was a very satisfactory one.

The year 1925 had marked a very distinct step forward on the march to more prosperous and normal times. The removal of the embargo on gold was one of the most momentous events of the year. Though undoubtedly it had a temporarily depressing effect on our export trade, the most difficult period seemed to have successfully passed without an unduly high Bank rate, and we were reaping the benefit of enhanced credit, a steadier exchange, and lower prices.

Other nations were following our example of returning to gold, with similar beneficial results. Currencies were being stabilised, budgets balanced, and debts settled. International relations had been improved and a much greater sense of security obtained by the Pact of Locarno.

CO-OPERATION.

I do not by any means despair of the trade and future of our people. I have given you several reasons why the road seems to be broadening out, but it will be impossible to progress far along it if we are impeded by obstacles of our own making. We must march altogether with willingness to co-operate and to make sacrifices if we are to attain our goal. We all endorsed the vow of our Prime Minister in 1914 that we were prepared to spend our last drop of blood and our last shilling to win the war. During its progress we spent the best of our blood. It has only been since its successful conclusion that we have felt the full financial strain, but we have not nearly reached our last shilling. No one who subscribed to the Prime Minister's declaration—and who did not?—is entitled to claim that he has the right to be as well off since the war as he was before, and if we see our pet projects hampered by necessary economics, or our personal wishes and ambitions thwarted by inevitable sacrifices and compromises, we must be prepared to co-operate with unselfishness and goodwill for the common benefit. Much has been said lately of the new spirit in industry, and I think there is a greater recognition of the truth, which I sincerely believe myself, that capital and labour are fundamentally and naturally partners and not antagonists, that they fail or prosper together, and that the only method by which they can succeed is by recognising their mutual requirements and their interdependence. In fact, it would appear that the more likely, certainly the more logical, danger in the future may be the conflict of interests between different sections of labour, rather than between labour and capital.

In contemplating the difficulties of the present time, I find much consolation and encouragement by studying the conditions at the beginning of last century. The same problems confronted our ancestors as those with which we have to deal. Reparations, international obligations, excessive taxation, closed or partially closed markets, ineffective demand for our exportable commodities, currency depreciation, fluctuations in exchange, the resumption of the gold standard—all these questions had to be dealt with and solutions found. All the arguments, good and bad, and the quack remedies which have cropped up again in our time, found their advocates last century. Capital levies, repudiation, either open or disguised, inflation, tariffs, the use of index numbers for controlling the vagaries of money, none of these suggestions were without their supporters. It is a hopeful sign that many of these problems have already in our case been satisfactorily settled, and with much less social disturbance than in former times. We have seen nothing, I am glad to say, to compare with the insurrectionary meeting at Spa Fields, the "Battle of Bonnymuir," or Peterloo.

In spite of the argument that our successful issue from our similar financial and industrial troubles at the end of the Napoleonic war was only made possible by the extraordinary industrial development which then took place, we are entitled to hope that ultimate solutions may be found

for those questions as yet unanswered. The history of the last ten or twenty years does not suggest to me that inventive faculty is dead in our day, or that our capacity to compete in the world's markets is dying. If it is true, as has been authoritatively stated, that we have been holding our own in the proportion of the world's trade which we have obtained, even under present handicaps, it is an encouraging feature. As markets broaden out and our old customers increase their capacity to place orders, as the temporary stimulants of depreciated currencies to our foreign competitors disappear, as the cost of living continues to come down here and to increase in those countries where it has not yet risen in proportion to the fall in exchange, it is not unreasonable to expect that our competitive capacity will continue gradually to improve, and we have recently had proof that, as far as the quality of our goods is concerned, we are admittedly equal or superior to our competitors.

My conclusion, therefore, is that our feet are now on the road to recovery, and that the measure of our progress will depend upon ourselves and our united efforts.

A SCRIP BONUS.

Before I sit down there is a matter of some domestic interest to which I should like to refer. Judging from letters and other communications which I have received during the last few years our shareholders have been tempted sometimes to think that although undoubtedly they have benefited indirectly from the increasing strength of the bank, something more might have been done for them. While they are most ready to realise that a bank is a public institution, and, perhaps above all other businesses, should be conducted with a careful regard for the public interest, yet, when all this is admitted, they believe they are justified in expecting a greater direct share in the increased profits of the last few years. They contend that very considerable benefits have been granted to the staff in increased salaries and pensions, in payment of income-tax, in special war allowances, in large allocations from profit to the recently established widows' and orphans' fund, as well as to the provident and pension funds, to say nothing of the profit-sharing scheme. I know they have not grudged any of these and they have appreciated the wisdom of placing year after year large sums to premises account, but there have been signs of disappointment that, so far as they are concerned, they have received no increased benefit.

Within certain limitations I recognise the justification of this view, and I will show you how we propose to meet it. For a long sequence of years, both before and during the war, a large part of our profits had each year to be applied to meeting the depreciation in the market value of our investments, and it is only in recent years that the reverse operation has been experienced. Our investments have increased in value, and we have sold a considerable portion, realising substantial profits. These have not arisen out of the ordinary day-to-day operations of the bank: still less can they be said to have been made at the expense of the public from unduly heavy charges to our customers. In fact, I think it is true to say that banks are freer from the charge of profiteering than any other business.

THE BOARD'S PROPOSAL.

We propose, therefore, to capitalise a portion of these realised profits on the sale of investments, and to the holder of every ten of our existing shares give one new share of £1 fully paid, making an addition to our present issued capital of £1,437,296. These new shares will rank *pari passu* with the existing shares for the first 5 per cent. dividend in any year, and for the first £1 on the repayment of capital. They will be limited in dividend to 5 per cent. In regard to fractions, the new shares representing these will be sold by the bank and the proceeds distributed in cash amongst the holders of such fractions. This will involve an increase to our authorised capital, and a notice will be sent out to every shareholder, with the report of to-day's meeting, of an extraordinary general meeting to be held on February 24th, for the purpose of passing the necessary resolutions. I hope shareholders will appreciate the fact that I have thought fit to reserve this piece of news until to-day in order that I might explain our proposals first to them personally at this meeting.

Sir Austin E. Harris, K.B.E., deputy-chairman, seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

fact the case, since any payments in kroner must be "at the average rate quoted in Vienna for cheque London on the due date," so that the coupons are cashable through any exchange dealer in their proper sterling equivalent. It may be added that these bonds are a trustee security in Austria.

NEWSPAPER SHARES.

Gossip in the Stock Exchange would give the holders of Associated Newspapers £1 Deferred shares, standing at 6½, a cash dividend of 60 per cent. and a share-for-share capital bonus. Clearly something desperate has to be said to maintain newspaper shares at their present levels. We can conceive of few industrial investments more speculative than the shares of newspapers figuring as the "popular Press." The principal item on the asset side of a newspaper balance-sheet is goodwill. Premises, printing machinery, stocks of paper, and debtors are items which together are not nearly so important as goodwill. If there are "trade investments," goodwill probably enters into that item also to a large extent. Goodwill is the "pulling" power of the newspaper, dependent upon the personality of the owner and upon popular taste. Of these two "securities," which is the shorter lived? The investor in newspaper shares should, therefore, realize that the bulk of the capital will be represented by an intangible asset, goodwill, and that this asset may dwindle away rapidly or may rapidly increase in value through the interplay of those fickle forces, personality and popular fancy, and that in any case the balance-sheets of newspapers will be more or less unintelligible because newspapers will not give away secrets to their competitors. In general, over-capitalization and unsteadiness of revenue will be found to be the features of newspaper finance. Let us examine the three main groups, the Rothermere, the Berry, and the Beaverbrook press, as investments.

The complicated interlocking of the companies of the Rothermere group reads like a Fleet Street nursery rhyme. Daily Mirror controls Sunday Pictorial polls. Together they must control Daily Mail Trust, and Daily Mail Trust, if it hasn't gone bust, owns 53½ per cent. of the deferred shares of the Associated Newspapers, Limited, which owns Daily Mail, Evening News, Weekly Dispatch, Overseas Daily Mail, Anglo-Newfoundland Development, and what not. That is not quite the whole story, because Daily Mirror and Sunday Pictorial also control the Daily Sketch and Sunday Herald and the Empire Paper Mills. The only simple part of the story is that Lord Rothermere controls the whole lot by controlling the Daily Mirror. With the minimum of personal risk—merely by owning more than half the 700,000 £1 Ordinary shares in Daily Mirror Newspapers, Ltd.—Lord Rothermere now controls five newspaper companies, with a combined share and loan capital of £7,355,437, valued on the Stock Exchange at £24,000,000. The public put up the big money and Lord Rothermere kept control. When the bad years come for the Rothermere Press, it will not be Lord Rothermere who will lose. Here is the profit and dividend position of the Rothermere papers with the current market prices of the Ordinary shares and respective yields per cent.:—

| | Year ends. | Capital. £ | Net Profit. £ | Ord. Div. % | Ord. Price £ s. d. | Yield. s. d. |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Daily Mirror ... | Feb., 1925 | 1,050,000 | 228,894 | 30 | 6½ | 4 19 10 |
| Sunday Pictorial ... | Feb., 1925 | 1,250,000 | 269,442 | 25 | 3½ | 6 17 0 |
| Daily Sketch ... | June, 1925 | *100,000 | 126,270 | — | Not quoted | — |
| Daily Mail Trust £1 shares (7/6 paid) ... | | 956,887 | Sept., 1925 158,232 | — | 5½ | — ↑ |
| Assoc. News ... | Mar., 1925 | 2,600,000 | 917,046 | 40 | 6½ | 5 18 0 |
| * Also £1,000,000 6½% Gt. Mort. Deb. ↑ Bonus of 5/6 applied in reducing unpaid liability on the 2/- shares. | | | | | | |

The capitalization of the Berry group—Allied Newspapers, Limited—became rather high when it had finished buying from the Daily Mail Trust the Hulton papers (excepting Daily Sketch and Sunday Herald). Recollect that Lords Beaverbrook and Rothermere bought the Hulton papers for about £6,000,000, and sold them (plus

a Glasgow paper of Lord Rothermere, but minus the Evening Standard) for £8,000,000 to the Daily Mail Trust, and that the Daily Mail Trust kept back the Daily Sketch and Sunday Herald, and sold the remainder to the Berry group for half a million more than they cost the Trust. Allied Newspapers is, therefore, clearly over-capitalized at £6,750,000.* Its profit for the year ending December, 1924, was £830,202, and for the year 1925 it has so far paid an interim dividend of 5 per cent. Allied Newspapers took over a group of Scottish newspapers and another group of Newcastle papers and sold them to a subsidiary, Allied Northern Newspapers, for £1,242,000 cash and £1,000,000 ordinary shares in Allied Northern Newspapers. As usually happens in newspaper finance, the public put up the money for this purchase (by subscribing for £2,300,000 6½ per cent. Debenture stock) and the Berry brothers kept control.

The Beaverbrook group comes best out of this analysis. The Daily Express has a capital of only £276,500. The Evening Standard was bought for a mere song of £250,000, having been kept out of the Daily Mail Trust deal. Now the balance-sheet of the London Express Newspapers, Ltd., at June 31st, 1925, looks distinctly weak, but Lord Beaverbrook is frankly running the paper not for the sake of immediate gain, but for the fun of it all. Lord Beaverbrook has spent money like water on the Sunday Express and the Daily Express, emboldened, no doubt, by the thought that of every £1 spent Lord Rothermere pays 9s., for Associated Newspapers holds 49 per cent. of the Ordinary shares of the London Express Newspaper, Ltd. Without doubt, the money lavished on advertising the Sunday Express and Daily Express has created goodwill, and, in a sense, hidden reserves. When the bad days come, it will be the Daily Express and Sunday Express, with small capital and hidden reserves, that will come out on top.

* Further £1,000,000 5½% Debentures were issued in Nov., 1925.



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THE GAS LIGHT & COKE COMPANY.

The General Meeting of the Proprietors of the Gas Light and Coke Company was held on February 5th. Mr. D. Milne Watson (the Governor) presided. He said:

The past year has been one of considerable anxiety. Early in the year it became apparent that it would be impossible to maintain the price of gas at the figure we had been charging since June, 1923, as we were met with a serious slump in the market for residuals, more especially in respect of coke. The price of coke fell away, especially in the export market, and we had no alternative but to raise the price of gas per therm from 8.6d. to 9.4d. from June last. This increase in price brought about a reduction in the Dividend for the second half of the year from £5 6s. 8d. to £4 17s. 4d. under the Sliding Scale.

Notwithstanding the increase in the price of gas, we have had an increase in business of nearly 4 per cent., of which 1 per cent. represents gas supplied in bulk to the Brentford Company.

There has also been a very satisfactory increase of 14,000 in the number of consumers and of 92,000 in the number of gas stoves sold and let on hire.

CAPITAL SPENT ON EXPANSION.

We have spent nearly £600,000 on capital account, the chief items being for Showrooms, two new ships, and additional mains and service pipes, meters and stoves. We have credited the Capital account with £83,000 for depreciation, etc. There has, therefore, been a net increase of capital expenditure of about half a million, bringing our debit balance on Capital Account to £855,000. The reason for this growth of expenditure is the enormous increase in our business—an increase of nearly 11 per cent. in two years, which in a business of our magnitude means a very large figure. That the Company is in a position to require the expenditure of additional capital to the extent shown is a very healthy sign and an indication of the large development of our business.

The higher price of gas, even with the increase in sale, did not make up the loss in revenue from residuals, and there is a decrease in the balance carried to net revenue of £115,000. After paying a dividend of £5 6s. 8d. for the first half year and £4 17s. 4d. for the second half year, we are carrying forward £108,000 as against £223,000 last year.

THE GOVERNMENT'S ELECTRICITY SCHEME.

There is one question above all others in the minds of gas shareholders to-day and that is the Government's proposals regarding Electricity. There has been much talk about Electricity during the past few years, and the three parties in turn—Liberal, Labour and Conservative—have all shown themselves interested in the subject. Early last year the present Government appointed a special committee, of which Lord Weir was Chairman, to consider proposals with regard to the reorganisation of the Electrical Industry, and in due course it was announced that this Committee had come to certain conclusions. These conclusions were not made public, but from what was said it became quite apparent that the recommendations were of a very drastic character. I felt it my duty as your Chairman, and also as President of the National Gas Council, to call attention to the question at various public meetings during the summer, and particularly protested against anything in the way of a subsidy being given to the Electrical Industry.

We now know from the Prime Minister that the proposals of the Government are on broad lines, and we are given to understand definitely that it is the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill early this Session dealing with the subject.

The main outlines of the scheme are that the country is to be covered by a gridiron of electric transmission cables, that generation is to be concentrated at a few selected stations to take the place of a large number of small generating stations, and that the frequency, at present varying in different parts of the country, is to be rendered uniform. These proposals are fundamental and very far-reaching.

THE POSITION OF THE GAS INDUSTRY.

The Gas Industry has no hostility to electricity *per se* and realises that electricity renders great and important services to the community—in fact, our feelings towards the Electrical Industry are quite friendly.

What do we then complain of? We complain of the State taking a particular Industry under its wing to the detriment of another Industry which has been long and firmly established and which has every reason to be

proud of its useful achievements. The Gas Industry has an honourable history extending over 110 years, during which long time it has developed itself and carried out its duties without any assistance from the State.

NO DIRECT SUBSIDY.

The Prime Minister has now assured us, and such assurance is satisfactory, that there will be no direct subsidy; on the other hand, however, he has definitely stated that State guarantees will be granted similar to those granted under the Trade Facilities Acts, a matter which may be of serious import to the Gas Industry. I think the Government should in all fairness, be prepared to give equal financial assistance to the Gas Industry.

In the meantime, the National Gas Council have appointed a strong Committee to bring the views of the Gas Industry generally before the Government, especially on the questions arising out of the guarantees under the Trades Facilities Act, and other points.

We also complain that the Government should deliberately boost electricity. Many of the speeches which have been delivered upon the subject would lead one to believe that a reorganised system of electricity would cure most of the ills from which the country is suffering. I have pointed out over and over again that electricity, when used for power, enters very little into the cost of production in many of the important manufactures of this country; and that although electricity is extraordinarily cheap on the North-East coast, where it is sold at as low a price as anywhere in America, the North-East coast has been for a long period in the deepest trade depression of any part of the country.

ELECTRICITY NOT A "CURE ALL."

You will have observed that the Prime Minister also holds this view and does not think that the industry of this country will be saved by electricity alone. He tells us that experts consider that the consumption of electricity should be more than doubled within the next 15 years. In order to bring about such a condition of affairs it may be asked in what direction will the electricians seek to extend their activities. It is obvious that they must look to domestic heating and cooking. This is a field largely occupied by the Gas Undertakings of the country who supply their consumers' requirements in this respect much more efficiently than the electricians are able to do and with much greater economy in the consumption of this country's most valuable asset—coal.

In the case of gas production, 80 per cent. of the heat units in coal are recovered, whereas in the case of electricity generation only 20 per cent. are recovered, and under the most favourable circumstances three or four times the amount of fuel would be consumed at an electricity generating station, as compared with a gas works, to deliver the same quantity of heat to the consumer. From the point of view of coal conservation, it would be thoroughly unsound if people were persuaded to take up electric heating instead of gas heating.

THE GREAT NATIONAL SERVICES OF GAS.

We appeal for no favours, but we do ask the Government to give equal prominence to the Gas Industry. Politicians and others are constantly engaged in drawing rosy pictures of a future electrified England, no mention being made of the services gas is giving and is capable of continuing to give. They say no harm is going to be done to the Gas Industry if there is no subsidy. Do they not realise that this boosting of electricity is the most valuable propaganda for that particular industry? Electricity has a clear field of its own for some purposes, and if this propaganda were limited to this, we in the Gas Industry would have little to complain of, provided that the outstanding advantages of gas, particularly for heating and cooking, received the same prominence. Gas has occupied this field because of its efficiency, and it should be made clear to the public that this is so and that the Government are not intending by the introduction of the Bill to try to oust gas from its own particular province.

If you did not know anything of the subject, you would imagine that nothing had been done, for instance, to reduce the smoke evil and that the country was waiting for the development of electricity before this particular question could be tackled. Is it realised that there must be well over ten million gas fires and cookers in use in this country, and the cleaner atmosphere to which we are now becoming accustomed is largely due to this fact?

It may be that super-stations, and one system of frequency, is the way to deal with electricity in this country and it may be necessary to re-organise the Electrical Industry. In any case, whatever the Government decide to

do, let them see that it is done without injuring another industry that is performing its duty in the service of the community.

AN APPEAL FOR FAIR PLAY.

The propaganda that is going on has already seriously injured the security of Gas Stocks. The price of our stock has fallen since the Government campaign began in December from 88 to 81, and it is the same in many other companies. Nor does it end with the Stock. Constant reference to, and praise of, electricity tends to have an influence on the consumer's mind, giving him a prejudice against gas.

The Prime Minister and the Government, realising these difficulties, might do a great deal to reassure both the shareholders and consumers by openly stating their appreciation of the services rendered by gas in the past and the necessity for its continued use in the future, and by pledging themselves that the Bill should contain such safeguards as may be necessary to protect gas against unfair competition.

THE NEED FOR CHEAP COAL.

What is wanted much more than anything else in this country is cheap coal. On coal is based the prosperity of all our great industries. It is a question which is all-important and is right at the base of all national prosperity. The supply of electricity is no doubt an important question in this country, but it is not to be compared with that of coal.

During the past year the Coal Industry has been going through an unprecedented crisis. As you know, the Government set up a Coal Commission to inquire into the state of the Industry after granting the subsidy. I attended and gave evidence on behalf of the Gas Industry. As long as the Coal Industry is in a state of unrest, there is no chance of the country returning to prosperity. Any form of uncertainty does an incalculable amount of harm, not only at home, but abroad, and it is to be earnestly hoped that some means will be found of getting the Coal Industry out of its difficulties and that speedily. Until this question is settled there is little hope of a trade revival in this country.

The amalgamation with the Brentford Company is now completed and, I believe, has opened up a very bright prospect for all concerned. A large outlay will be required for the development of the district of Brentford and we are now actively engaged in making preparations to meet the demand which we anticipate will come along in due course.

I believe that the principle underlying amalgamation is, in general, sound, and I hope to see an increased number of amalgamations in the Gas Industry. I am sure it will tend to greater efficiency and cheaper gas.

THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD SHOWROOMS.

In these days when we have electricity knocking at the door, it is absolutely essential that it should be clearly demonstrated that gas can be used not only efficiently, but artistically. Being an old Industry, it is apt to be assumed that it is not adaptable to modern conditions; and the only way to combat this idea is to show actually what can be done in practice. I hope that you will see for yourselves how artistically and efficiently gas can be used both for heating and lighting. We have erected new Showrooms at Seven Sisters Road and Golders Green, and are shortly opening new showrooms at Church Street, Kensington, which I trust will be worthy of the Company.

GOOD RELATIONS WITH EMPLOYEES—THE GREAT VALUE OF CO-PARTNERSHIP.

Our relations with our employees continue to be very satisfactory. I cannot allow this occasion to pass without once more calling attention to Co-partnership. In Co-partnership, properly applied, we have one of the most promising solutions in the industrial difficulties in this country. In some industries it may be difficult of application; but if it is really earnestly desired by those who are in control of big businesses to bring schemes of this kind into operation, a way out of the difficulties can be found. No one imagines that Co-partnership can show great benefits either to the business or individual in two or three years. Everything must have a beginning; and if once begun the effect will soon be felt. Under our scheme, which started in 1909, we have 13,000 Co-partners and the amount of Stock held by them is £575,000.

We have increased our fleet by putting two new ships into commission, which will mainly be used in connection with our Fulham Works, and we have every reason to believe this will be of considerable economy to the Company.

Efforts are being made at the present moment to increase the use of tar for road-making purposes and this Company is supporting those efforts in various ways.

A RECORD DAY'S OUTPUT.

The working results have been very good during the year, and all the staff and workmen have worked excellently. They were all tested very much on December 4th when we had a record output of gas. It was a cold, dark day and the demand for gas was unprecedented. The output was 946,160 therms (or 189,232,000 c.ft.) as against the maximum of 830,785 therms (or 166,157,000 c.ft.) on December 10th, 1924, referred to at the last meeting. This was equal to nearly 14 per cent. increase. This was met without unduly straining our powers and the consumer had the gas he required at full pressure.

As already mentioned, owing to the price of gas having been increased, the dividend has been reduced to £4 17s. 4d. This exactly equals the pre-war dividend. When our standard price was revised by the Board of Trade two or three years ago, we were given a standard price of 11d. per therm which, with the actual price charged of 8.6d., allowed a dividend of £5 6s. 8d. to be paid. This dividend was evidently considered then a fair one for the Company. Owing to the drop in residuals, however, we were unable to continue to pay that dividend. Therefore, we thought it right to apply for a revision of our standard price. We have been most modest in our application and have asked for a standard price of 11.4d. per therm only. The London County Council, the City of London, and the Middlesex County Council have signified their agreement. The Board of Trade, however, will hold an inquiry into the matter, but I hope that the result will be that our application will be granted and that we shall be enabled to pay a slightly higher dividend.

The Company have also lodged a Bill in Parliament with regard to further Capital powers and as to a dividend on the Ordinary Stock, as well as other matters,

THE REPORT AND ACCOUNTS WERE ADOPTED.

At subsequent Extraordinary Meetings the shareholders sanctioned the raising of additional money by the creation and issue of Debenture Stock under the Company's Acts, and approved the Company's Bill now before Parliament.



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BOOKS.—Weigall's Ancient Egyptian Works of Art, many illus. 32s., pub. 65s., 1924; Life and Confessions of Oscar Wilde, by Frank Harris, 2 vols., £2 2s., 1919; Bullion Report, 1810, rare, £2 2s.; Smith's Theory of Money and Exchange, 1811, 22 2s.; Cooke's High and Low Prices, from 1793 to 1822, £2 2s., 1824; Jesse Collings, Land Reform 1906, ill.; Donisthorpe, Law in a Free State, 1895, 15s.; Sebohm, Village Community, 1906, 11s.; Hewitt's British Oology, coloured plates, 2 vols., £3 10s.; Versailles and the Court under Louis XIVth, by J. E. Farmer, 1906, £3 3s.; Rothstein's 24 Portraits, 15s. 6d., pub. 25s.; Sendahl's Red and Black, trans. by Robins, 2 vols., 1898, 25s.; Stendhal's La Chartreuse de Parme, trans. by Robins, with 30 Etchings, 1899, 3 vol., 42s.; Butler's Hudibras, illus. by Hogarth, 2 vols., call. 35s.; Arthur Machen's Works, "Caerleon" Edition, 9 vols., £5 5s.; Burton's Arabian Nights, 17 vols., £15; Rousseau's Confessions, 2 vols., privately printed, 24s.; Browning's Poetical Works, fine set, 15 vols., 1888, £2 10s.; London Tradesmen's Cards of the 18th Century, by Ambrose Heald, 1923, £2 2s.; Aubrey Beardsley, The Uncollected Work of, £2 2s., 1923; Lord Lytton's Works, "Knebworth" Edition, 40 vols., £1 10s.; Aldous Huxley's Antic Hay, 1st Edition, 1923, 15s.; Golden Ass of Apuleius, trans. by Adlington, 1513, £2 2s.; Sanger's History of Prostitution, 1919, 16s.; Masculine Cross and Ancient Sex Worship, 8s.; Moore versus Harris, limited issue, 1921, £3 3s.; George Moore's Esther Waters, signed copy, 1920, £3 3s.; Paradise Lost, Doves Press edit., £15, 1902; Lohengrin, illustrated by Pogany, signed by the Artist, full Vellum, £2 10s.; Lamb's Last Essays of Elia, 1833, first edition, £10.; Villari, Life and Times of Machiavelli, 2 vols. 1894, £2 2s.; Robinson's Old Naval Prints, £1 1s.; Life of Wagner, 6 vols., 32s., 1900; Hartmann's Confucius, £2 2s. If you want a book and have failed to find it elsewhere, try me. I am the most expert bookbinder extant — BAKER'S GREAT BOOKSHOP, John Bright Street, Birmingham.

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